THE LITTLE HOUSE IN THE WOODS

CLARA WHITEHILL HUNT

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WHAT SHALL WE READ TO THE CHILDREN?

THE LITTLE HOUSE IN THE WOODS

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MARGARET NOW BEGAN TO CLIMB THE LADDER

The Little House in the Woods

By

CLARA WHITEHILL HUNT

With Illustrations

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Chapter I

HOW DOROTHY'S WISH "CAME TRUE"

THE LITTLE HOUSE IN THE WOODS

CHAPTER I

HOW DOROTHY'S WISH "CAME TRUE"

WHEN Dorothy Rogers was five years old she received a great many nice presents on her birthday. The present she liked best of all was a book of fairy tales. Mother read aloud the stories again and again. Dorothy particularly liked the tales in which a fairy appeared to the hero and offered him three wishes. So many times the hero wasted the fairy's gift, asking for foolish things because he spoke quickly and thoughtlessly, that Dorothy decided to have her mind all made up beforehand about what to ask for, in case a fairy ever appeared

to her and told her she might have three wishes.

First, Dorothy thought, she would ask for a baby sister.

Second, she thought, she would ask for a baby brother.

And third, she would ask to live, with her father and mother and brother and sister, in a little house in the woods like Snow White's.

Now, although the fairy did not appear to Dorothy and the baby brother and sister did not come, the third wish came true only a few weeks after Dorothy's fifth birthday. She went to live in a little house in the woods! It was n't precisely like the little house where Snow White and the dwarfs lived. It was even nicer, Dorothy thought, because *her* little house in the woods was close by the waters of the blue, blue sea.

Dorothy and her father and mother

lived all summer long in their dear little house, and then they went back to the city. They lived in the big, noisy city all the autumn and all the winter and all the spring, but when the summer came again and Dorothy was six years old, Dorothy and her father and mother again went to live in their little house in the woods.

This story will tell you about Dorothy's second summer in the little house under the trees by the shores of the blue, blue waters.

First, there was a long journey to take from the great city. Dorothy had to ride in so many different trolley-cars and trains and boats that she got tired trying to count them all; but at last the long journey was over, and Uncle Ned was swinging Dorothy out of the last boat on to the little pier at the foot of the rocks in front of the little house in the woods. And there on the pier were Aunt Jessie and Baby Billy and

Aunt Elizabeth and Mrs. Sayre; and racing across the beach to welcome Dorothy came Frances and Margaret Fairfield and Margaret Sayre. In a minute there were hugs and kisses and handshakes and every one talking at once, because every one was happy to think of the good times they were all going to have together, all summer long.

Soon Dorothy and the little girls and the aunties were climbing the funny teetery runway from the float to the top of the rocks, while father and Uncle James and Uncle Ned and the boys followed carrying the trunks and the suitcases up to the piazza of the little house.

Dorothy ran eagerly in at the door to see if things looked as she remembered them from last summer. Yes, there was the great fireplace with the chimney made of big "cobblestones" reaching up to the ceiling of the living-room. There were the

chairs and the table and the desk and the shelves for books which Father had made from trees that had grown in their very own woods. The room was gay with flowers arranged by the aunties to make the little house seem to say, "Glad to see you back again!"

Dorothy next ran into her own pretty room, the little girls crowding in after her. In one corner were three narrow shelves on which Dorothy had kept her collection. She remembered that she had left on these shelves last summer a number of smooth white pebbles shaped like tiny eggs, a great many different kinds of shells, two starfishes, a big sea-urchin, a row of pine cones of all sizes from tiny ones to big ones, and a necklace made of pretty seeds. But now the collection was all in disorder. Some of the things were on the floor. Many of the shells were broken; and of the necklace nothing was left but the

thread on which Dorothy had strung the seeds.

As Dorothy gazed in surprise at her ruined treasures, Frances exclaimed :—

"Oh, the field-mice have eaten your necklace. They got into my room too, and messed things up."

"Or maybe it was a chipmunk," said Margaret Fairfield. "I saw one scampering across our attic floor the other day."

"Never mind," said Margaret Sayre. "You can find lots of other things just as good. Oh, Dorothy, ask your mother if you can't go over to your Uncle James's bungalow. It's new since last year, you know, and your Aunt Elizabeth has some lovely kittens."

So Dorothy ran to ask her mother, who said:—

"Wait a minute, dear. Where is that brown suitcase? You must put on your

sneakers before you run around on these slippery rocks."

The brown suitcase was found with the sneakers inside it; and Dorothy took off her city shoes and put on the rubber-soled ones. Now she could climb the rocks "like a fly on the side of the house," as she said, or run along the mossy paths in the woods and up the piney hillsides without fear of slipping.

The little girls ran out of the door, down the piazza steps, and along the narrow path that led to Uncle James's bungalow. They were so eager to see the new house and the kittens that they did not stop to notice the bright red bunchberries that decked the mossy carpet under the baby birch trees. They did not even wait to pick and eat the blueberries that looked as blue as the sky and tasted as sweet as sunshine could make them.

In a minute they came to a little bridge which Dorothy had never seen.

"Look, Dorothy," said Frances. "Uncle James lives on an island — at least, it's an island at high tide. So he had to build a bridge to the mainland or else they'd have had to swim or come across in a boat. Only at low tide you can wade across."

The little girls stopped in the middle of the bridge and looked down into the water below for a minute. Then they ran across the bridge on to the island.

Here was the new bungalow, all a lovely mossy green color, roof and sides and every part of it; and around the bungalow was a little grove of trees and around the grove were the blue waters of Penobscot Bay. It was just as Frances said. Uncle James did not need to build a fence or a wall around his land. The water made a sort of wall. But, then,

people do not need walls to keep out bad people in this pleasant land where Dorothy and her friends live in summer. The bad people do not seem to care to come to that country.

Uncle James and Aunt Elizabeth and Cousin Lincoln had not yet come back to their little house, but the kittens were there, chasing one another across the broad piazza floor, running up and down the piazza posts and even scrambling up on the screen door. They were beautiful kittens, with long, thick fur and big, fluffy tails, and they were so playful and yet so tame that they loved to be petted almost as much as they liked to play.

Dorothy soon had the gray kitty in her arms, and the little fellow snuggled into her neck and purred loudly as if to say he was glad of another friend to love him.

"Oh, Frances!" said Dorothy. "Do

you suppose I could have a kitty too? Were there any left where Aunt 'Liz'beth got these?"

"I don't think so," said Frances. "But Aunt Elizabeth will let you play with these all you like."

The kitty was so lovely that Dorothy would have been glad to stay on Uncle James's piazza and play with him all the morning. But the little girls were so eager to show everything to Dorothy as quickly as possible that with one last hug and kiss she put Muffet down, and off they ran once more.

Back across the bridge and up the path they ran, past Dorothy's bungalow where Father and Mother by this time were unpacking trunks and putting the house in order.

Now the children were going to the bungalow where Frances and Margaret Fairfield lived with Uncle Ned and Aunt

Jessie and Baby Billy and their big brother Arthur.

This time the way was not along a path in the woods. First, the little girls scrambled down steep rocks to a pebbly beach. This was the place where the children bathed or waded when it was not too cold. At low tide the curving beach was very wide, but when the tide came in, the water sometimes covered the pebbly floor close up to the roots of the trees that bordered the shore.

It was low tide now, and the little girls' feet made a rattling sound as they crunched over the pebbles toward Uncle Ned's bungalow. On days when wind and waves were still, Uncle Ned and Aunt Jessie could always tell when some one was coming to call on them by the "scrunch" of the little stones under the visitor's feet.

Dorothy particularly loved Uncle Ned's

house. Its dark red roof and walls and white-framed windows, peeping out from among the "Christmas trees" that grew close about it, always gave her a pleasant feeling of the good times the "bungaloafers" had within the red house and on its rocks and its beach.

"Shall we take Dorothy first up to our room?" asked Margaret Fairfield.

"Oh, no," said Frances. "Let's show her the Gloucester hammock. She has n't seen that, nor our doll's hammock either."

So they trooped up the steps of the piazza that ran across the front of the house — such a huge piazza, long enough and broad enough for the big tea-parties that Aunt Jessie was likely to have any afternoon, all summer long.

Across one end of the piazza hung a fine big Gloucester hammock. All four little girls sat in it at once and there was room to spare. They were a little out of

breath from so much hurrying, so they sat still awhile, chatting about what they should do next.

Near the big hammock hung a tiny one exactly like it in which Margaret's doll lay sleeping. Beyond the doll's hammock stood a pretty tea-table made by Uncle Ned, and a lovely rustic seat, too, which he had made. Beautiful fern baskets hung from the piazza posts. In front of the house were the great Maine rocks with fir trees seeming to grow out of them; and beyond the rocks were the wide blue waters dotted with green islands. White sailboats skimmed over the blue water, and far, far above lovely seagulls, the sun gleaming on their white breasts, sailed across the blue, blue sky.

"Now let's show Dorothy our room," said Margaret, after they had swung in the hammock for a few minutes.

"All right," said Frances.

So they jumped out of the hammock and in at the green front door. Across the big living-room they were going to the stairs when Frances exclaimed: —

"I smell something good!" And with that she darted into the kitchen, the other little girls following at her heels.

"Oh, Mother, may we have some cookies?" asked Frances.

"Yes, of course," said Aunt Jessie, laughing. "You would smell cookies 'way over to Bock's Harbor, would n't you, you always-hungry kiddies?"

"*Your* cookies we would, Mrs. Fairfield," said Margaret Sayre. "They are the best any one ever made."

The little girls stood about the big sunny room munching the delicious cookies, while Dorothy's bright eyes looked eagerly around getting acquainted again with Aunt Jessie's kitchen.

"See, Dorothy," said Margaret Fair-

field. "We have running water this year, just as we do in the city. Mr. Sumner and Mr. Gifford laid pipes from the spring up on the hill down to the bungalows, and now we just turn the faucet and get our water as easy as anything."

Dorothy knew it was much easier for Aunt Jessie in her housekeeping to get water from a faucet, but privately she was a little sorry to have anything in Maine "just like the city." She had always been much interested in the rain-barrels out on the kitchen porch. On rainy days when the water ran down the steep roof of the bungalow, it was made to flow into a pipe which emptied the water into large barrels standing near the kitchen door. Dorothy had enjoyed watching the water gush from the spout of the pipe, and she had liked to see Frances fill her pitcher with the long-handled tin dipper that hung near the barrels. This rainwater was used for

washing faces and washing clothes, not for drinking or cooking. The drinking-water last summer had been brought in pails from the spring on the hill.

After they had eaten their cookies the little girls started for the stairs.

"Is Billy upstairs, Aunt Jessie?" asked Dorothy.

"No, dear, he is out with his daddy. I should n't wonder if they are in the vegetable garden picking string beans for supper."

Clattering up the bare stairs that smelled so good and woodsy, the little girls flocked into Frances's and Margaret's room. It was a big, pretty room, with clean, bare wood walls on which Frances and Margaret had tacked their favorite pictures. In one corner of the room was Frances's little white bed and in the opposite corner was Margaret's. The little girls had a dressing-table made of a broad shelf

which Uncle Ned had fastened to the wall, and Aunt Jessie had covered with flowered chintz. Uncle Ned had made the washstand, too, another shelf covered with white oilcloth. And the chairs had not come from a city shop either. They came from the woods back of the bungalow and Uncle Ned's tools had built them.

The little girls spent a very happy half-hour looking at Frances's and Margaret's treasures.

Then Uncle Ned's voice was heard calling up the stairs: —

"Dorothy, your mother asked me to tell you to come home now. It is almost dinner-time, and I suspect all you kiddies need some washing-up."

"All right, Uncle Ned, I 'm coming," called Dorothy.

Then Margaret Sayre jumped up, saying: —

"I guess my mother will be wanting me, too."

So Dorothy and Margaret went down the stairs and out through the kitchen, down the steps of the back porch and across the pebbly beach. They climbed the rocks again near Dorothy's house, but here Margaret said good-bye and went on up through the woods toward Mrs. Sumner's.

Dorothy ran in at the door of her little house, and there was Mother waiting to help her small daughter get washed and brushed and into a fresh middy.

Just as the last button was fastened, they heard something that sounded like a horn blowing three long blasts and then three short ones.

"Ah, there's the old conch shell!" said Mother. "And I think Mr. Sumner is making it call, 'Oh, all ye hungry Bungaloafers, dinner is almost ready. So come

in from your bathing and in from your boats, and come up to Cedar Hill Farm to try our fresh fish!'"

Dorothy laughed gayly at Mother's idea.

"But no one is in bathing to-day, Mother," she said.

"Not to-day," said Mother. "But that is what the conch *usually* has to say. You watch and see after this."

Then Father appeared, fresh from *his* "washing-up," and Dorothy ran and hugged him, exclaiming: —

"Oh, now we don't look like city people any longer! Daddy has on a flannel shirt and khaki trousers, and Mother and I have middy suits, and we all have on sneakers. And we don't care a bit how dirty we get, do we, Mother, dear?"

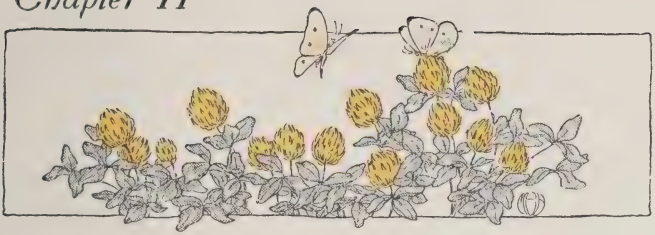
"Not a bit," laughed Mother, "provided we get a swim every morning and clean faces and hands for the table."

"And when we go on picnics we shan't even have to get clean for meals!" said Dorothy.

"Oh, what joy!" exclaimed Daddy. "You and I will go as dirty as Indians, shan't we, Puss? Mother is sure to look clean enough to save the reputation of the family."

And so, joking and laughing, Father and Mother and Dorothy left the little house, without even locking the door, and started up the road through the woods toward dinner.

Chapter II



CEDAR HILL FARM

CHAPTER II

CEDAR HILL FARM

HOW they enjoyed the short walk through the woods! The ground under their feet was soft and cool and springy, not a bit like hard, hot city pavements. To be sure the road was uneven and "hummocky," and one needed to be careful not to catch one's feet in roots and low bushes or stumble over rocks here and there. But the loveliness overhead, where bits of blue sky showed between dancing green leaves, and the loveliness all about, of flowers and ferns and sweet smells and soft breezes — ah, it made Dorothy wish never to have to live in the city again.

Beyond the woods they passed a sunny field of tall grass that rippled in waves of green as gentle breezes swept over it.

"Just see how big and red the clover

is!" said Mother, noticing the lovely blossoms on the edge of the field.

"Oh, Mother, may I pick some?" asked Dorothy.

"When we come back you may," said Mother. "We must gather flowers every day to fill our bowls and baskets."

Now they crossed the main road which ran by Mr. Sumner's and on up to the village. And beside the road, at the foot of the slope which was Mr. Sumner's front yard, lay a tiny pond.

"Oh, Mother! Mother!" shrieked Dorothy. "Just see the baby ducklings. Oh! Oh! Are n't they beautiful?"

For there on the pond Dorothy had spied a whole family of little brown, fluffy, yellow-billed creatures that were swimming as fast as they could, away from these giant people, to get close under the care of their mother duck.

"So! There 's your friend Mrs. Jemima

"JUST SEE THE BABY DUCKLINGS"

Puddleduck come to live at Mr. Sumner's, Dorothy," said Mother.

"And there 's Mr. Jeremy Fisher to keep her company," Father added. "See the old green bullfrog sitting on the log, swelling out his yellow shirt-front?"

Dorothy was too delighted to speak. She forgot all about being hungry and wanted to stay and watch the ducklings. But Daddy told her that the pond and its people would stay there all summer, and she would have plenty of time to make their acquaintance.

So Dorothy went on across the narrow plank which made a little bridge over the the brook that flowed into the pond. They climbed the grassy path up the little hill and in a minute more they were on Mr. Sumner's piazza.

Then such a welcome as Father and Mother and Dorothy received from all the people who lived during the summer with

the Sumners of Cedar Hill Farm. Besides Mrs. Sayre and Margaret, whom Dorothy had already seen, there were Mr. and Mrs. Sumner, Mr. Sayre and Mr. Burchard, Miss Hart and Miss Grace Hart, tall Ruth Hopper, fat little David, and Mr. and Mrs. Hopper. Then up the path came Uncle Ned and Uncle James and their families, who, like Dorothy's family, ate dinner every noon at Mrs. Sumner's. And all the other fathers began to joke Dorothy's father because his shirt and trousers were so clean and had n't any patches or holes in them, and they pretended they were going to send him back to the city because he looked too stylish. And the mothers said: —

"Don't they behave like a lot of school-boys just let loose from school?"

Then Arthur and Lincoln said: —

"No, they are n't half so sensible as school-boys!"

So everybody laughed, and Dorothy thought it was the best fun in the world to be in the midst of such a jolly big family, because at home she was used to such a tiny family, only herself and her father and mother.

Next everybody went into the dining-room, and while the grown people talked and laughed as they ate, the children attended busily to filling their "tummies" that they might the sooner get out to play.

After dessert was eaten the mothers excused the children, who went quietly out of the dining-room. As soon as they reached the piazza, however, there was no more quiet. All began talking at once.

"Let's take Dorothy up to the spring to see the new reservoir," said Frances.

"Oh, no! Let's go down to the barn. That's new, too, since last summer," said Margaret Sayre.

"But down in our woods the tree-house that Daddy made us is best of all," said Margaret Fairfield.

"Now I know Dorothy would rather see our camp than anything else. Would n't you?" said big Arthur, looking down teasingly at little Dorothy.

Dorothy laughed excitedly. It was bewildering to have a choice of so many delightful things to do.

"I 'll tell you," said Ruth Hopper. "Let 's begin with the nearest thing, then go on with the next nearest, and so on till we 've seen everything."

This seemed a sensible plan. The nearest thing was the new barn, part-way down Mr. Sumner's little hill toward the road.

You see, Mr. and Mrs. Sumner lived in Maine all the year, winter and summer. So they did not build their house close by the water, as the summer people

do, because winter winds from the ocean are terribly cold. Mr. Sumner, years ago, had chosen a spot on the hillside and had built his warm house close against the sheltering cedar woods which protected the home from the bitter north winds of Old Winter.

From the back of the house one looked directly into the woods, and the little wild creatures of the wood often came close to the kitchen doorstep, not a bit afraid of the house people who never harmed them. From the front piazza there was the loveliest view of the island-dotted blue waters; and one could see the bungalow roofs peeping out from the trees close to the shore.

The little girls ran down to the barn, but Arthur and Lincoln went off by themselves. How sweet the barn smelled with its new boards and its haymows partly filled with new-mown hay. Old Dan, Mr.

Sumner's horse, looked inquiringly around from his stall as if to say: —

"Who are all these chattering creatures and what do they want here?"

A mother hen had just led her brood of chickens into the barn and she was showing them how to find the nice bits of grain scattered on the floor. The chicken family were having a fine feast.

"Oh, see! There 's a kitty!" exclaimed Dorothy, whose eyes had been eagerly taking in the new sights.

Sure enough, there was a lively brown-and-black kitten scampering up one of the posts of the haymow. The little girls tried to coax him down, but pussy did not feel like being petted just then, so he kept beyond reach of outstretched hands.

"You ought to see Mrs. Sumner's old cat," said Ruth. "She 's the cleverest cat you ever saw. She is n't this kitten's mother, though. You know Mrs. Sum-

ner can't keep lots of kittens, so whenever Blackie has a new family Mrs. Sumner gives away all but one of the babies. Well, old Blackie knows this, so she hides her babies up in the woods until they are big and she thinks they can take care of themselves. Then she brings them down to the house. Mrs. Sumner says she never can find the hiding place. Sometimes when she sees Blackie starting up the road toward her kittens, Mrs. Sumner or some one else follows her at a little distance. Then Blackie sits down in the road as if she had just come out to look at the view. After a while the people forget for a minute to keep their eyes on her, and Blackie always knows just when to disappear into the woods while they aren't noticing."

Dorothy liked this story very much and would have been glad to hear more, but Frances exclaimed: —

"You 've seen enough of the barn for to-day, have n't you, Dorothy? Let 's go up to the spring now. That 's the next nearest thing."

So the five girls left the barn and went back up the steep little path toward the house. This time Dorothy noticed what she had been too excited to see before. Almost half the front of Mrs. Sumner's house was covered with bushes filled with great clusters of crimson rambler roses. There were enough bouquets of roses on the bushes to have filled dozens of bowls and vases; and oh! how beautiful they looked in the sunshine.

Dorothy was too happy for words as she gazed on the lovely sight, and while she stood drinking it in, Ruth exclaimed in a whisper:—

"Sh-h, girls! There's a humming-bird, right by the piazza steps. Do you see him?"

The girls stood like statues watching the tiny humming-bird that, poising his wee body on fluttering wings, thrust a long bill into the heart of a flower and took a deep sip of the honey which the flower was glad to give him. Then the tiny bird flew to another flower and another, his little body flashing like many jewels in the sunlight.

It was a wonderful sight to the city children, and it pleased them that the dainty creature, though he knew they were near, did not take fright and fly away.

After a little the beautiful bird had drunk his fill and in a twinkling his humming wings bore him out of sight. The children drew long breaths of joy at what they had seen.

Next Dorothy spied another interesting thing.

"Oh, see the funny little man on top of the pole!" she cried.

The funny little man was made of wood. He was about the size of Dorothy's boy doll, Jack Sprat. Mr. Sumner had made him with broad, flapping arms and had fastened him on top of a pole in such a way that when the wind blew, it caught the flapping arms and made them whirl round and round and also made Mr. Windmill Man whirl round on his pole. When the wind blew gently, Mr. Windmill Man turned around slowly, but when the wind blew hard, it almost made you dizzy to see how fast the little man had to whirl.

Frances now took Dorothy's hand. "We 'll never see half the things if we keep stopping," she said.

"But Dorothy is going to stay all summer," remarked practical Ruth.

This thought did not seem to make any difference to Frances and the two Margarets. They had the feeling that, since Dorothy had been later in arriving than

the rest of them, she must catch up with all the sights as soon as possible.

So once more the five little girls started toward the spring. They went around back of the house, where they saw Mr. Sumner carrying in an armful of wood from the woodpile.

"Well, Dorothy, getting homesick for the city yet?" asked Mr. Sumner with a twinkle in his eye.

"Oh, *no*," said Dorothy. "I want to stay here always and forever."

Mr. Sumner laughed.

"I 'll tell you. When your father and mother go back in September, you stay here with Mrs. Sumner and me and see what fun a Maine winter is!"

Dorothy laughed gayly.

"Mother would n't be able to take care of Daddy without me," she said. "But when our ship comes in, Daddy says we *are* coming up here in winter."

Mr. Sumner went on into the house, smiling, and the little girls soon reached the rail fence that kept the cows from straying from their pasture into the garden and down the road.

Frances and Ruth, who were the tallest of the girls, held open the gate for the younger girls to pass through. Then they swung the gate carefully back into place on its great flat stone.

Now there was a short walk along a mossy path through the woods. The path was wet as well as mossy, because there were many springs on this woodsy hillside, but somehow wet feet in Maine don't seem to make children catch cold as they do in the city.

Soon Frances said: —

"Now you'd better let me take your hand, Dorothy, because the rocks down to the spring are very slippery."

So Dorothy, carefully guided by

Frances, stepped down the smooth, wet stones that made a sort of little stairway to the spring.

Oh, what a pretty sight she then saw! There was a lovely pool of water, so clear that every little pebble on its bottom showed plainly. Overhead the tall trees made such a deep shade that the pool was like a brown mirror in which the girls could see their faces. The sides of the rocky bowl in which the water lay were bright with vivid green moss. And this little bowl of water, icy cold on the hottest summer day, never was empty, never failed to supply refreshing drink to thirsty man and beast, even though the rain sometimes forgot for a long time to come down to the dry fields.

All the little girls took long drinks of water from the mug that hung on the low bough of a tree near by.

"Now we must show the reservoir to

Dorothy," said Ruth. "You see, Dorothy, the water flows out of this pool and runs down the hill as a little brook. Partway down the hill Mr. Sumner and Mr. Gifford dug a hole and lined it with cement and that's the reservoir. The brook flows into the reservoir and keeps it full, and pipes carry the water down across the fields to the bungalows."

The girls scrambled down the rough hillside to gaze into the reservoir.

"I don't think it's very pretty," said Dorothy.

"No. God's pool is lots prettier," said Ruth. "But this is very useful to our mothers."

"Oh, now *do* let's go down to show the tree-house!" begged Margaret Fairfield.

"But what about our play-house up here in the woods?" asked Ruth. "That's so near it won't take long to show that."

"Well, do let's hurry then," said Margaret.

The girls turned back and climbed the hill a short distance. The two Margarets ran ahead while Ruth and Frances helped Dorothy up the rough path. Soon the Margarets stopped at a place where two slender trees stood side by side.

"This is the door to our house, Dorothy," called Margaret Sayre. "We two Margarets will go inside, then you must ring the bell and we'll let you in. Remember, when you come into the house you must walk between these two trees."

Dorothy loved this kind of play. Frances showed her a round knob on one tree-trunk. This was the doorbell. Dorothy pressed the knob.

"Ding-a-ling-a-ling!" she heard.

Then Mrs. Margaret Sayre and Mrs. Margaret Fairfield came to the door and most politely invited their friends to step

inside. The doorway was so narrow that the ladies had to walk in single file.

"We have brought our friend Mrs. Rogers to see your new house," explained Mrs. Frances.

"We 're delighted to see you," said Mrs. Margaret Sayre. "You see the house is just finished and we are n't really settled yet. That 's why we answered the bell instead of sending the maid."

"Here is the drawing-room," said Mrs. Margaret Fairfield, leading the girls to a broad, flat place, carpeted with moss and with round moss-covered rocks lying about here and there on the ground.

"You see, we have our drawing-room decorated in green," explained Mrs. Sayre. "Try one of our green velvet chairs and see how comfortable they are, Mrs. Rogers."

Dorothy seated herself on a mossy stone, declaring it was very comfortable, indeed.

Next the ladies climbed a few steps to the library. On the floor above were the bedrooms. Each lady showed a mossy hollow which she had chosen for her bed.

Dorothy tried each bed just as Golden Hair tried the beds of the Three Bears.

"Here's my rocking-chair, Dorothy. You must try this," called Mrs. Sayre from her bedroom.

There, to be sure, was a stone, round on its under side, flat on top, and just large enough to hold a little girl. This stone rested on a broad level stone in such a way that the little girl could rock back and forth as she sat on her "chair."

The dining-room was visited next, and here the ladies sat around a tree-stump table while the footman and the second footman served ice-cream and afternoon tea. I am afraid that the footman and the second footman must have thought that their mistresses ate a great deal faster than

was strictly polite, but being well-trained servants their faces did not show what they were thinking.

Now the ladies all jumped up from the table and scrambled down the hill along the path back to the farmhouse.

Here Mrs. Sumner met them.

"Girls," she said, "Dorothy's mother left word that Dorothy was to come home before you started on another expedition. You know Dorothy has just taken a long journey, and if you try to show her everything the first day you may tire her so she won't be able to get out of bed tomorrow!"

The girls looked startled at this idea.

"Why, we ought to have thought!" exclaimed Ruth. "Dorothy is so much smaller than we are, and traveling at night is very tiring. Never mind, Dorothy. We've weeks and weeks ahead and you shall see everything before long."

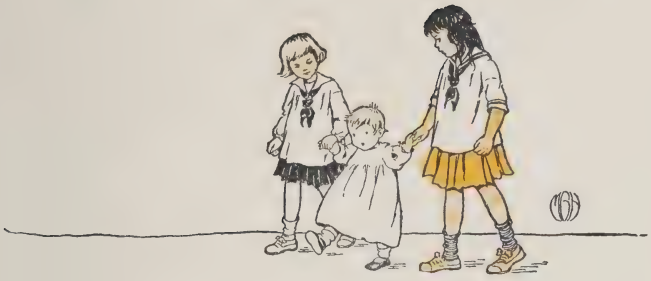
The girls, looking quite sober and disappointed, but realizing that Dorothy's mother knew what was best, walked down Mr. Sumner's path, past the duck pond, across the main road, along by the grain field, and through the woods to Dorothy's bungalow.

No sooner had the girls called good-bye and started on toward Uncle Ned's house than Dorothy ran in to her mother, almost ready to burst into tears because she could not go with the girls. But Mother took her little daughter into her lap and told her stories about the lovely times they were going to have all summer long; and presently Dorothy found she was so tired that after all she was glad to be quiet for a while.

She played inside of the little house until supper-time. Almost before she had finished her bread and milk, Dorothy's head was nodding with sleepiness, and

she was quite willing to go to the little cot bed in her own little room to get a long sleep so as to be ready for the next day's fun.

Chapter III



THE TREE HOUSE

CHAPTER III

THE TREE HOUSE

DOROTHY woke quite early the next morning. At first she did not realize where she was. She looked about her in wonder, not seeing the familiar city bedroom furnishings.

In half a minute, however, she remembered. She sprang joyfully out of her little cot bed and ran to her window. The trees came so close to the window that Dorothy could almost touch their leaves. Among the branches a pair of birds were flying about, carrying breakfast to their babies and chattering busily the morning's news of Birdland.

Dorothy ran into the living-room. No one was there. Then she ran into Father's and Mother's bedroom. That was empty too. Next she tried the kitchen, and there

she spied Mother out on the little back porch.

"Where's Daddy, Mother?" asked Dorothy.

"He has gone off in the 'George' with Uncle James to Bock's Harbor," said Mother.

"George" was the name of a motor-boat owned by Uncle James and Uncle Ned. Sometimes when the people were out sailing in "Nokomis," the wind died down so that "Nokomis" could not move ahead at all. You see, a sailboat always needs wind to blow on its sails and push it through the water. When "Nokomis" was "becalmed" — that's what they call it when a sailboat lies still for lack of a breeze — Uncle James would say: —

"Well, we'll have to 'let George do it'!"

Then the uncles would fasten "Nokomis" by a rope to "George," would start

"George's" engine, and the little motor-boat would go chugging ahead pulling big "Nokomis" behind it all the way home.

This morning Uncle James and Father were taking a trip in the "George," but "Nokomis" was left at home.

"Put on your clothes now, Daughter," said Mother. "There's a delicious breakfast waiting for you out on the piazza."

I don't believe Dorothy had ever dressed so quickly in her life as she did that morning, and Mother did not have to help her much, either. When the hair-ribbon was tied, Dorothy ran out on the piazza.

There was the breakfast-table set for one. Father and Mother had eaten their breakfast while Dorothy slept. On the table Mother had placed, instead of a large white cloth, two flowered Japanese "runners," with little doilies to match; and a clear glass bowl filled with brilliant

nasturtium flowers stood in the center of the table.

"Oh, aren't the nasturtiums lovely!" exclaimed Dorothy as she climbed into her chair.

"Yes, indeed!" said Mother, tying on Dorothy's bib. "And Aunt Jessie tells us we may have all we wish to pick. She sent these by Uncle Ned this morning with the delicious muffins which you will soon taste."

Dorothy looked over the table with sparkling eyes. There was a great bowl of blueberries, the fattest, bluest blueberries you ever saw.

"Where did the berries come from, Mother?" asked Dorothy.

"Lincoln and Arthur picked those for us," said Mother. "And the butter and cream Mrs. Drake brought us from her farm up beyond the village."

"Everybody brings us something! We

SHE LOOKED DOWN THROUGH THE TREES TO THE SPARKLING WATER

don't have to go to stores here to buy things," said Dorothy.

Mother laughed.

"I think we shall be able to buy enough at Mr. Gifford's store to save our kind neighbors from having to feed us all summer," she said.

Dorothy now set busily to work eating. Between bites she looked down through the trees to the sparkling water. The little boats fastened at the pier were bobbing and pulling at their ropes. "Nokomis," anchored out in deep water, was bowing this way and that as the fresh breezes and the merry waves swung her about at her moorings. Out at the weir men in boats were taking the shining fishes from the bottom of the net to be carried away and sold for hungry people's dinners. Beyond the weir, across the cove, Blue Mountain seemed so close in the clear air that Dorothy thought she could see the

birds among the trees which covered the mountain to its very top.

As Dorothy was finishing the last crumb of the last muffin, she saw Margaret Fairfield coming across the beach.

"Oh, Mother, here's Margaret! May I go with her?" Dorothy called, jumping hurriedly down from her chair.

"Suppose you wait to see if Margaret is coming for you or going on an errand for Aunt Jessie," said Mother.

"Oh, I'm *sure* she's coming for me," exclaimed Dorothy, and she ran down the piazza steps toward Margaret.

"Hello, Dorothy," said Margaret as the little girls met. "Can you come over to our woods now to see the tree house?"

"I'll ask Mother," said Dorothy eagerly.

Mother did not wait to be asked. She said: —

"Run along and have a good time, dearie."

So the little girls climbed down the rocks to the beach, crunched along the pebbles till they came almost to Margaret's house. Then they turned into a path between the trees back of the house.

"These are our woods," said Margaret, "back as far as that fence. Daddy bought this land of Mr. Sumner. I saw Daddy and Mr. Sumner chop down the trees to make room for building the bungalow. They were 'most all fir trees and we made lots of pillows out of the balsam."

"What's balsam?" asked Dorothy.

"That's what grows on the branches of a balsam fir. It smells so sweet. Mother stuffed lots of pillows with it — little sofa pillows, not big ones, you know. We have some at home in the city, and when the weather is damp they make our living-room smell so good we all say, 'Oh, don't you wish we were in Maine this minute?'"

"Did Uncle Ned build your bungalow too?" asked Dorothy.

"No, Mr. Gifford and some other men built it one spring before we came up. Before the bungalow was built we used to live at Mrs. Sumner's. That was when I was smaller than you are now. You were n't five years old then and your family did not come to Maine in those days."

Just then the little girls spied Margaret's father sawing wood under the trees.

"Oh, Daddy, I want Dorothy to see the tree house. Will you help her up into it?" asked Margaret.

"With pleasure, ladies," said Uncle Ned, laying down his saw and walking along with the little girls.

Only a few more steps and Margaret exclaimed: —

"Here we are! See, Dorothy, how these

four trees stand at the corners of a square? Daddy said they must have been meant for the corner posts of a house. You know how the Swiss Family Robinson lived in a tree house once. Well, Daddy made the floor across those limbs up there, and Arthur and Lincoln made the sides and the roof. And here 's a ladder up to the door of our house."

Margaret now began to climb the ladder, which had been made by nailing boards across the trunks of two of the trees. She pushed her way through the opening in the floor of the house and then called out: —

"Now, Daddy, let Dorothy come up!"

Dorothy looked a little bit alarmed, even though she was very eager to see what it was like to be in a tree house. Uncle Ned noticed.

"Don't be frightened, Dorothy," he said. "I 'll see that you get safely up and

down. But you must never try to do this alone. Remember, Margaret. You children must not coax Dorothy up into the tree even if the big boys offer to help. It needs a grown person to help such a little girl as Dorothy."

Margaret promised to remember. Then Uncle Ned kept a strong hold of Dorothy, not only while she climbed the ladder, but until she was safely seated on the floor of the house.

As soon as Dorothy was inside Margaret said to her: —

"Now, Dorothy, you sit in that corner away from the hole in the floor through which we climbed. Then I'll cover the hole by our trap-door and we'll be as snug as a bug in a rug."

Dorothy seated herself carefully as Margaret told her to do. Then Margaret closed the trap-door over the hole and sat down in the next corner.

Dorothy looked about her with shining eyes. The house was so small that not more than four children at a time could have sat in it, and they would have had to sit close and not wiggle. It was not very light inside the house either, because the windows cut in the walls were very tiny. But these things made it all the nicer, Dorothy thought. The ordinary houses people lived in were large and light. This tree house was not an ordinary house, so of course it should not be like big people's houses.

There were little chairs and a table in the tree house, but these were doll-size, not girl-size. The walls were decorated with pictures, pine needles, and bunches of some peculiar, sharp-pointed things that Dorothy had never seen before.

"What are those, Margaret?" Dorothy asked, pointing to the sharp objects.

"Those are porcupine quills," answered

Margaret. "Mr. Sumner gave them to us. A porcupine is an animal about as big as a dog. He is covered with those spiny things instead of with hair, so if an enemy tries to catch him he throws his needles into the enemy and gets away safely himself."

This was very interesting to Dorothy. She asked Margaret many questions about the porcupine, and about who made the chairs and the table, and whether the children ever ate their lunches there. She and Margaret were having a beautiful time when they heard Uncle Ned's voice calling: —

"Have you seen it all now, little girls? I ought to get back to my woodpile soon."

"All right, Daddy, we're ready," said Margaret.

Then Uncle Ned helped Dorothy down very carefully and Margaret followed without any help.

"Thank you, Daddy," said Margaret,

and "Thank you very much, Uncle Ned," said Dorothy.

"You're very welcome, little girls," said Uncle Ned. Then he turned back to his woodpile to finish sawing logs into the right lengths for the evening fire in the great fireplace.

"Now you must see the swing, Dorothy," said Margaret. "Would you like me to give you a turn at the swing?"

"No, thank you," said Dorothy. "Swinging makes me dizzy."

"All right, we'll just look at it, then," said Margaret.

So Dorothy was shown the swing near the tree house, but that was the first thing she had seen in Maine that did not interest her. She remembered the time when she had been miserably ill all night as a result of swinging, and she thought she would always hate swings because of that unpleasant experience.

"Now you must see the vegetable garden and the nasturtium bed, Dorothy," said Margaret.

Hand in hand the little girls walked on a short distance in the shady woods, and then they came out into the bright sunshine of a broad, open space where there were n't any trees.

"This is the vegetable garden, Dorothy," said Margaret. "In spring, before we come up, Aunt Mary Drake gets a man to plough and plant for Daddy, and then after we get here in June we take care of the garden. We have lima beans and peas and lettuce and radishes and beets and potatoes and string beans."

Margaret had hardly finished speaking before Dorothy caught sight of the nasturtium bed.

"Oh, Margaret," she cried, "what lots of nasturtiums! I never saw so many in my life!"

"Yes, is n't it a long row of them?" said Margaret. "Would you like to pick some now? You know you may have all you want. They grow better for being picked every day."

"Oh, goody!" exclaimed Dorothy. "I 'd like to take some home to Mother."

The little girls then began busily picking the bright flowers. There were so many lovely colors, pale yellow and deep yellow and orange and dark, velvety crimson and bright red, and ever so many shades of color that Dorothy had n't a name for. The girls picked all their hands could hold, and still there were plenty left to furnish honey for the bees that were buzzing from flower to flower.

"We 'd better take these home and put them into water before we do anything else," said Margaret. "You can leave yours at our house, Dorothy, till you get ready to go home."

So Margaret and Dorothy walked back through the woods to Margaret's house. On the piazza they found Aunt Jessie with Baby Billy and the two Miss Harts. Aunt Jessie was putting a patch on Frances's khaki bloomers, Miss Grace Hart was tatting a pretty collar, and Miss Hart, who "hated to sew," was busily engaged in trying to keep lively Billy from seizing the scissors and needles or falling off the edge of the piazza.

Dorothy gave a cry of delight at sight of Billy. She hastily put her nasturtiums down on the Gloucester hammock and then dropped on to the floor beside the roguish baby. Billy gave a long look into the face of this new friend. Then he decided he liked Dorothy. He smiled his sweetest smile, showing all the sparkles in his eyes and the dimples in his cheeks. He submitted to a hug from Dorothy and then he pulled away and started again on

his travels. Although he could not walk alone, he could creep so fast that it took a very lively and attentive nurse to save the baby from getting into mischief and hurting himself.

Dorothy now devoted herself to playing with Billy. He liked this very much and both little people had a beautiful time.

Meanwhile Margaret had carried both bouquets of flowers into the house and put them into vases of water. Presently she came out and joined Dorothy in playing with the baby. The girls each took one of Billy's fat little hands and helped him to walk up and down the piazza.

Billy was very proud of being able to do this. He was in such a hurry to get from one place to another that his little feet danced along and he crowed and chuckled with delight. The girls had to hold tight to keep the baby from toppling over in his glee.

The fun lasted quite a long time, but finally Aunt Jessie said: —

"Now, Billy Boy, it's time for luncheon and nap. Come with Mother and get some nice bread and milk."

But Billy did not like to have his play interrupted. He scolded vigorously as Mother carried him away, but the crying lasted only a minute. Billy was so sweet-natured and his mother knew so well how to interest him in a new thing to make him forget what he was crying about, that Billy's smiles always chased his tears away in a hurry.

"What would you like to do next?" asked Margaret of Dorothy.

"I don't know. Anything!" answered Dorothy.

"I think it s a good day for bathing, girls," said Miss Hart. "And it is almost bathing time if you are going in to-day."

"Oh, yes," said Margaret. "Let's go

right over and ask your mother if you may go in, Dorothy."

"All right," said Dorothy, "but first let me get the nasturtiums for Mother."

Taking Dorothy's flowers out of the water, the little girls hastened across the beach toward Dorothy's bungalow. Halfway across they met Frances and Ruth.

"Where have you been all the morning?" Margaret asked.

"We've been posing for Father," said Ruth.

Dorothy did not know what Ruth meant, but later she found that Ruth's father was an artist who made pictures to go into books. When Mr. Hopper wanted a picture for a girls' story, sometimes Ruth and Frances "posed" as the story-book girls.

"Where's Margaret Sayre?" asked Dorothy.

"She's up at Mrs. Sumner's," an-

swered Frances. "She was n't feeling very well and her mother told her that if she wanted to go sailing this afternoon she 'd have to keep quiet this morning."

"Are you going in bathing, Dorothy?" asked Ruth.

"I 'm going to ask my mother now if I may," said Dorothy.

"All right, we 'll see you later."

Ruth and Frances then went on to Frances's room to put on their bathing-suits, while Margaret and Dorothy hurried into the little bungalow, Dorothy calling: —

"Mother! Mother! May I go in bathing? All the other children are!"

Mother looked a little doubtful.

"Why, dearie, I 'm not sure it would be best for you. The water is so cold, and you have n't your 'sea legs' on yet."

"Oh, *Mother!*" said Dorothy pleadingly, the tears starting to her eyes. "And

I've got a new bathing-suit all ready and bathing-shoes, too!"

Just then Father's step was heard on the piazza.

"We 'll ask Father what he thinks about it," said Mother.

Father's answer was that he would go into the water first and find out whether it was too cold, and that anyhow it would be safe for Dorothy to put on her bathing-suit ready to wade for a little while even if she did not get into the water "all over."

This answer sent Margaret flying back to her house to change her clothes while Dorothy was helped into the new bathing-suit.

When the suit and slippers were on and hairpins had fastened the hair close about her little round head, Dorothy capered about the living-room calling: —

"Now I'm not a girl any longer, Mother

and Daddy! I'm your boy Jack! I have short hair and a boy suit on!"

Just then Father appeared in his bathing-suit which was quite like Dorothy's, gray, with a white border at neck and arms and knees.

"Daddy and I are twins," cried Dorothy; "only Daddy has n't on bathing-slippers. Why have n't you, Daddy?" she asked.

"Because my feet are n't as tender as little-girl feet," answered Father. "The pebbles and the barnacles would cut your skin till it bled, but they won't hurt my tough hide."

"Are n't you going in, Mother?" asked Dorothy.

"No, thank you," said Mother, with a shudder. "Penobscot water suits me perfectly to look at and to sail on, but I prefer my bath-water warmed."

Dorothy now ran down to the beach

where the girls, all in their bathing-suits, were waiting for her before plunging into the water. The Misses Hart were seated on one of the great rocks ready to watch the fun, and Mother and Aunt Jessie soon joined them, "as audience for the show," they said. The men and boys had all gathered at the little pier. Wading out from the beach was too tame for them. They wanted to dive off the pier and swim in deep water.

Soon there was a merry crowd swimming and splashing about in Penobscot Bay. Frances could swim as well as any boy, and she struck out from the beach for the pier. Ruth was just beginning to learn to swim. Uncle James came over to help her. Margaret had n't learned how yet, and she always hated to make the first plunge to get wet up to her shoulders. Aunt Jessie would call from the rocks: —

"Hurry, Margaret! Don't stand so long 'shivering on the brink'!"

As for Dorothy, the first touch of the cold water on her bare legs decided her that she did not care for anything but wading to-day. This was one thing about Maine, she thought, that was n't quite so nice as home. The surf-bathing with Father in the warm ocean near her city home was one of her great delights. But then, Maine was so much lovelier in every other way that who cared that the water was too cold to suit a tender little girl? The boys and men and Frances loved it and maybe the other girls would learn to like it after a while.

It seemed as if the bathing and wading had lasted only a minute or two before the mothers were calling: —

"Time to come out, kiddies! You 've been in long enough."

It was odd to see how the same children who had dreaded the cold water in the first place hated to leave it now that

SHE DID NOT CARE FOR ANYTHING BUT WADING TO-DAY

they were warmed up with the exercise. The mothers had to call more than once to get the children started, but the older people knew that too many minutes in Penobscot Bay would mean sick children to-morrow.

Soon bare, glistening legs were scampering toward the bungalows, carrying bodies clad in clinging wet suits; and in another minute rough towels were giving rub-downs that made white skins glow red and the people inside the skins feel, oh! so good, and oh! so hungry.

By the time real clothes were on again Mr. Sumner's conch shell was heard and the children, not waiting for their fathers and mothers, raced up to Cedar Hill Farm and began eating their dinners as if they were just about starved to death!

Chapter IV

THE SAIL IN "NOKOMIS"

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THE SAIL IN "NOKOMIS"

AFTER dinner Uncle Ned said: — "Who wants to go sailing this afternoon?"

"I do! I do! I do!" shouted all the little girls.

The boys did not say anything. They had other plans for the afternoon.

Most of the grown people wanted to go, however.

So Uncle Ned said: —

"Be ready in an hour, then, everybody."

Before the end of the hour the company began to gather. The girls were already playing on the float as the grown people drew near.

There was Aunt Elizabeth crossing the little bridge from her island. The Cedar

Hill Farm people, in shady hats and with sweaters on their arms, were straggling down through the woods. Uncle Ned was galloping across the beach playing horse for delighted Billy perched on his shoulder.

Some of the men had rowed out to "Nokomis" where they were hoisting sail and making ready for the trip, while Dorothy's father was rowing back to the pier for a load of passengers.

In a minute Father's boat was filled with people who soon were climbing out of the little boat into big "Nokomis." Then Dorothy's father went back for another load.

It was not long before every one was aboard. There were most of the Fairfields and all of the Rogerses and the Sayres, the two Miss Harts, Mr. Burchard, and Ruth Hopper. Ruth's father could not leave his work and Mrs. Hop-

per said that David had missed too many naps lately so she was staying with him.

The passengers quickly made ready for the sailing.

Ruth and Frances climbed away out on the roof of the little cabin and lay on their "tummies" near the bow of the boat. Some of the fathers sat out on the deck too. Dorothy and the two Margarets got down into the cabin to play "keep-house." The ladies seated themselves on the wooden seats that ran along "Nokomis's" sides. Billy, being set down on the floor of the cockpit, crept swiftly toward a box full of pebbles which was kept under one of the benches. Billy remembered that it was great fun to gather handfuls of pebbles and fling them on the floor. The little stones made a fine noise and a splendid mess as they rolled about.

Before the people were settled, "Nokomis" had left her moorings, and with

Uncle Ned at the tiller guiding her, she was skimming merrily over the waves.

Ah, that was a beautiful way to ride! Dorothy and the Margarets were so busy playing in the close little cabin that they did not notice, but the other people drew in long breaths of the pure, cool air that blew on their faces. The sky was so blue, so blue. The water was bluer than the sky, and it was all sparkles in the sunshine. The waves were just high enough to make "Nokomis" ride up and down with a motion that all these people loved, but they weren't high enough to frighten any one. Now and then, as the prow of "Nokomis" cut through the water, the spray dashed over Frances and Ruth, wetting them like a rain-shower, but the girls didn't mind a bit, because the sun and wind dried them so quickly.

Lovely seagulls wheeled about in the blue above or swooped down to float

SKIMMING MERRILY OVER THE WAVES

awhile on the blue waters. Wherever one looked, toward land or sea or sky, one saw loveliness and felt happy for the beauty God had given.

After a while the little girls climbed out of the cabin, remembering to stoop so as not to bump their heads in the low doorway. "Nokomis" was just drawing near to Mogginag Lighthouse.

"See, Dorothy," said her mother. "Do you remember the lighthouse? In the top of that tower the lighthouse keeper, every night, lights a huge lamp. The light shines out over the water and says to the sailors, 'Don't come near me, for I am standing on a rock that will dash your ship to pieces if you run against it.'"

Dorothy looked with great interest at the lighthouse.

"Does he light the lamp every single night?" she asked.

"Every single night, summer and winter, rainy or snowy, or foggy or clear," said Mother. "If the keeper neglected his duty even one night, it might mean that some sailor fathers would never come home to their little children again."

Dorothy thought this over soberly for a minute.

"Where does the keeper live?" she asked presently.

"He lives in the little house beside the lighthouse tower," answered Mother.

"Yes, and he has a little daughter, Dorothy," said Aunt Jessie. "And since the keeper's family are so shut in by the rough weather in winter and are so far from any school, our Government sends a teacher who lives with the lighthouse people all winter and 'keeps school' for one little pupil."

"Does n't the little girl ever come off the island?" asked Dorothy, thinking how

lonely it must be not to have any playmates.

"In summer she does, but I suppose for weeks at a time in winter she does n't," answered Aunt Jessie.

Dorothy gazed long at the lighthouse, trying to imagine herself the keeper's little daughter. She decided she would rather live in a flat in the city, even though Penobscot Bay was so beautiful.

"Nokomis" was soon leaving Moggin-nag Light behind and sailing by shores where many cottages showed among the trees and where groups of "summer people" were playing tennis.

"The people are too close together here," remarked Mr. Burchard.

"Yes, indeed," exclaimed Mrs. Sayre. "How much nicer it is at our cove!"

Now the girls at the bow called out: —

"There 's a schooner loading at the ice-house."

Dorothy did not know in which direction to look.

"Straight ahead, to the left, Dorothy," said her mother. "See that long building near the shore? That's an ice-house. Back inland a short distance is a lake which freezes in winter. The men cut blocks of ice from the lake and store it in that house. They pack sawdust around the ice, so it does not melt much even in summer. When warm weather comes and people want ice, a big schooner ties up to the dock and the ice-house men send blocks of ice sliding down a wooden pathway into the hold of the schooner. And when the captain has all the ice he wants, he bids the sailors hoist the sails on those four tall masts, and the great boat sails off to carry ice to the city people."

"Does our ice come from that ice-house?" asked Dorothy.

"I'm afraid not," said Mother. "It

would be nice to think it did, would n't it?"

Margaret Sayre was intently watching the great cakes of ice sliding down the incline into the schooner. Suddenly she said: —

"That's a funny sliding hill. Where I live we sit on a wooden sled and slide down an icy hill. Here the sleds are made of ice and the hill is of wood!"

Every one laughed.

"That sounds like the land of the Upsidedownians," said Miss Hart.

Miss Hart was thinking of a story in which the people did everything just the opposite of the way we do things in real life. Of course Dorothy was eager to hear the story, so Miss Hart told it.

"Oh, Mother, will you get me that story?" she begged.

"Yes, if Miss Hart will tell us where to find it," answered Mother.

So Miss Hart said the story was in a book called "Short Stories for Short People." She told the children another funny story from the book, about a boy who planted a squash seed which grew so fast that one of the squashes ran away with the boy on top of it, traveling as fast as an express train.

How the little girls laughed at that funny way of traveling.

"I'd be willing to run a race with that squash to-day," said Uncle Ned. "Here we are at Nugentville in just forty minutes from the starting-point."

"Good old 'Nokomis'!" said Mr. Sayre; and the little girls patted the sailboat as if she had been a live thing that could appreciate the loving.

Now Uncle Ned steered "Nokomis" up to the dock where Uncle James and Mr. Burchard jumped out and made her fast. Then the men helped the ladies and

the youngest girls out of the boat, but Frances and Ruth and Margaret Fairfield were already climbing the ladder from the float to the pier. It was low tide now, and this meant that the float on which they landed was much lower than the pier, so every one would have to climb the ladder. Dorothy was afraid to try it, but the ladder rounds were close together, so Father said: —

"You can do it, Dorothy. I will stay close behind you and keep hold of you, but you don't want me to carry you up. You want to learn to be nimble and fearless like Frances."

By the time Dorothy and all the grown people had climbed the ladder most of the children were a long way ahead on the road to Nugentville. Uncle James laughed softly.

"Making a bee-line for ice-cream," he said.

Sure enough, when the rest of the people reached the village they found the girls already seated at the little tables in the ice-cream shop. Uncle James pretended to be very much surprised.

"Why, you kiddies don't expect any ice-cream *to-day*, do you?" said he.

"Oh, no! Oh, no!" sang out the girls merrily. "We *never* have ice-cream at Nugentville!"

"If *you* don't want any, Uncle James, I'll eat your share," offered Margaret Fairfield politely.

The men laughed at this, for every one knew that Uncle James liked ice-cream as much as the little girls did.

Soon each person was eating his or her favorite kind of delicious cream. Dorothy thought no city cream had ever tasted so good as this. She ate slowly to make it last as long as possible.

When the last spoonful had disappeared

they all strolled along the village street making purchases at the stores. Aunt Jessie bought sneakers for Frances. Aunt Elizabeth bought an oilskin coat to keep her dry in rainy weather. The other ladies hunted pretty picture post-cards to send to their friends. The fathers found a hardware shop where they bought something needed for "George."

After a while the purchases were all made and the company started back toward "Nokomis."

When all were aboard, as Uncle James took the tiller, he said: —

"We shan't beat the quick-running squash on this trip. The wind is in the wrong direction."

Although it took a long time to sail home the trip was so interesting that no one grew tired. There were many white-winged sailboats skimming over the blue waters. Some of the boats lay so far

over on their sides that Dorothy exclaimed: —

"Oh, Mother, the people will tip out into the water!"

"No, dear, the men know how to manage," said Mother. "Pretty soon 'Nokomis' may do that, too, but Uncle James will not let her go over too far."

Just at that minute Uncle James sang out: —

"Low bridge!"

Then all bent their heads low while the heavy boom, to which the bottom of the sail is fastened, swung over to the other side of "Nokomis." Then Dorothy found herself sliding down "Nokomis's" floor, about as the ice-cakes slid down their incline. Mother laughed.

"Now, Dorothy, 'Nokomis' is doing what you saw the other sailboats do."

Dorothy did not exactly like this kind of a slide, but she knew Father wanted his

little daughter to be as brave as a boy, so she did not fuss about it.

Next the children spied the steamer "Anna Belle" coming toward them.

"Oh, Daddy, please blow the horn," begged Margaret Fairfield.

So Uncle Ned got the tin horn which was kept in the cabin and blew three long blasts in salute to the "Anna Belle." Much to the children's delight, the captain of the "Anna Belle" saluted "Nokomis" in return, making the steamer's big horn give three long, deep "toots."

"That 's the way boats bow to each other as they pass, Dorothy," Father explained. "But some of the big boats are n't as polite as the 'Anna Belle' about returning the salute of the little boats."

Dorothy was deeply interested. All of the ways of the boats and the water seemed interesting to her. Last summer she had been such a little girl that she

had forgotten many things this year, but she was fast recalling them.

As they passed the ice-house they found the great schooner was no longer at the dock.

"She must have been taking her last cakes of ice aboard as we passed," said Mr. Burchard. "Ah, there she is out beyond Mogginag Light!"

Ah, that was a beautiful picture, the great four-masted schooner, with all sails set showing against the dark green coastline and the blue sky.

"How commonplace a steamboat looks compared with that thing of beauty," said Aunt Jessie.

Every one agreed, and all kept their eyes on the stately vessel until she rounded an arm of land which hid her from view.

Next Uncle Ned began to sing one of his funny songs. Uncle Ned knew a great many, and Dorothy laughed so hard she

nearly fell down, at the one about the katydid who could "play the fiddle with her left hind leg," and about the animals going into the ark. Then all the people began: —

"What shall I get the water in,
Lieber Heidrich, lieber Heidrich?
In a jug, liebe, liebe Lisa,
Liebe Lisa, in a jug!"

When they stopped singing this song — they did not *finish* it, because this was a ridiculous song that kept going on and on and never was finished — Ruth Hopper said: —

"Liebe Lisa must have been some relation to 'The Three Sillies,' she had so little sense."

"And to the Peterkins," said Aunt Jessie.

"And to 'Paminondas," said Frances.

"And to me when I get aboard 'Nokomis' or a small boat," said Miss Hart.

They all laughed at this. Miss Hart

was such a city person that she had n't yet become used to boats.

Once when the Misses Hart were spending the evening at Aunt Jessie's, Uncle Ned was doing all sorts of stunts that made the family laugh. Miss Hart and Uncle Ned were great friends, but they loved to play jokes on each other. This evening Uncle Ned said: —

"I will now impersonate Miss Hart getting aboard 'Nokomis.'"

He then pushed two rocking-chairs together. One chair was a rowboat and the other was "Nokomis." Uncle Ned then climbed up on the rowboat, making it rock so that he wobbled and flung himself about as if he were going to fall into the water. Then he clambered awkwardly over into the rocking-chair "Nokomis," waving his arms wildly, and finally tumbling heavily into the seat, where he drew a loud breath of relief. Miss Hart laughed

harder than anybody else at naughty Uncle Ned's nonsense.

After the songs they played "The Minister's Cat." Frances began: —

"The Minister's cat is an Angry cat."

Then the others had to say something else about the cat, something that began with "A."

Ruth said, "The Minister's cat is an Amiable cat."

Margaret said, "The Minister's cat is an Awful cat."

So the game went on. Dorothy had to be helped by Mother in this game until they came to the C's. Then, after she had heard the others say, —

"The Minister's cat is a Cranky cat";

"The Minister's cat is a Clever cat";

"The Minister's cat is a Curious cat";

"The Minister's cat is a Curly cat"; she cried: —

"You need n't help me this time, Mother.

I know one. The Minister's cat is a Kitchen cat!"

And she could n't think why all the people laughed. Do you know why?

Now "Nokomis" was drawing near home. Uncle James guided her skillfully up to her moorings. Dorothy's father stood on the deck, boat-hook in hand, ready to catch the mooring-rope just in time. Uncle Ned let down the sail and some of the ladies found the little pieces of rope called "stops" with which they tied the sail in a sort of bundle along the boom. They called this furling the sail.

While the sail was being furled, Mr. Burchard was rowing a boatful of people to the pier and coming back for another load. Dorothy went ashore in the second boat. As Mr. Burchard rowed near the the landing Aunt Elizabeth called out: —

"Way enough!"

So Mr. Burchard backed water with his

oars and stopped the boat at the float. Then they all stepped out. They climbed the teetery runway to the top of the rocks, and there they were at Dorothy's little house in the woods.

Then everybody said what a beautiful sail it had been, and they thanked Uncle Ned and Uncle James. And then some of the people went up through the woods to Cedar Hill Farm, and Uncle Ned's family crunched across the beach to the red bungalow, and Uncle James's family crossed the little bridge to their island.

And so ended another happy day in Maine.

Chapter V

THE WALK TO THE VILLAGE

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THE WALK TO THE VILLAGE

A FEW days after the sail in "Nokomis," Mother said:—

"I must go up to the village to-day to get a few things at Mr. Gifford's store and mail some letters at the post-office."

"Shan't I do the errands for you?" said Father.

"No, thank you," Mother answered. "I'd like the walk and I have n't seen the Giffords yet."

"May I go with you, Mother?" asked Dorothy.

"Yes, dear. I don't think the walk is too long for such a country girl as you are now."

Dorothy laughed gleefully.

"I like being a country girl lots better than being a city girl, don't you, Mother?"

"Yes, indeed!" was Mother's reply.

Soon Dorothy and her mother were on their way up through the woods. As they reached the road that led to the village, they spied the two Margarets standing by the duck pond talking to Mrs. Jemima Puddleduck and Mr. Jeremy Fisher.

"Hello, Margarets," sang out Dorothy. "We are going to the village."

"Oh, we'll go with you!" exclaimed the Margarets.

Just then Miss Grace Hart came down the path from the farmhouse carrying a handful of letters.

"May I join the party, too?" she said. "I have letters to mail for the whole household."

Then they all started up the winding road toward the tiny village on the hilltop a mile away.

How different this was from city walking! In place of rows of tall houses on

both sides of the road there were trees and flowers and waving grass. Instead of noisy trolley-cars and motor-horns, and the clatter of wagon wheels on pavements, there were bird songs, and soft breezes rustling the leaves, and the hum of insects. The road was not straight and flat like most city streets. It wound in pretty turns. It climbed little hills and dipped down into little valleys.

When Dorothy and the others were on top of the first little hill, they turned and looked back over the blue waters of the Bay. The air was deliciously cool up here. When they went down into the little valley, it was quite hot because the breezes from the Bay liked best to stay on the hilltops.

Suddenly Margaret Sayre exclaimed:—

"Why, there 's the kitten following us!"

"Oh, do you suppose he remembers

that he came from the Giffords' so he wants to go back to them?" said Margaret Fairfield.

"I hardly think that," said Mother, "because he came down from the Giffords' in a covered basket. But he ought not to be here. The walk is too long and hot for such a little fellow."

"We have n't time to take him back to Mrs. Sumner's and then catch the mail," said Miss Grace. "I 'll carry him if he gets tired."

At first kitty frisked and romped along in lively spirits, but soon Miss Grace noticed that he was panting with the heat and the climb, so she picked him up and gave him a ride.

"I want to carry the kitty, too," begged Dorothy.

"Very well, you 're quite welcome to," said Miss Grace, laughing. "You 'll find he grows heavier by the minute."

Kitty quite enjoyed his rides, first with one and then with another. Every now and then he would scramble out of the girls' arms and skip along the road, chasing butterflies and playing with the waving grass, but always he was glad to be picked up again.

"Oh, see, there 's a garter snake!" said Margaret Fairfield presently.

"Oh, where?" exclaimed Miss Grace with a little jump. She did not like snakes.

"There, on the side of the road," said Margaret. "He won't hurt you a bit, Miss Grace. Garter snakes are n't poisonous, and they are good for the garden. They eat the insects that hurt the vegetables."

The girls stood watching the little brown snake, as he wriggled frantically to hide himself in the grass from these dreadful giant people.

The next interesting sight was a pretty

little striped creature leaping along the stone wall.

"Oh, Mother, what is that?" Dorothy cried.

"That's a chipmunk," said Mother. "He is a cousin of the squirrels that you feed in the Park. He is smaller than the gray squirrels and he has n't such a bushy tail, but he likes nuts just as well and he chatters and scolds just like the squirrels when they are naughty."

"Will the chipmunk let me feed him?" asked Dorothy.

"No, he is not tame like the Park squirrels," answered Mother.

Although the chipmunk was not tame enough to come close to the people, he was not very frightened either. He sat on the wall looking with his bright eyes at these big two-legged creatures as if he were quite curious to know all about them.

"WILL THE CHIPMUNK LET ME FEED HIM?"

Now the road dipped steeply down into a deep hollow. Here the sound of a waterfall could be heard.

When they reached the foot of the hill the girls took Dorothy close to the fence at the roadside and there they looked down upon a beautiful stream of water rushing and tumbling down the rocks on its way to the Bay. The rocks were covered with glossy green moss which was always wet with bright drops from the dashing water.

How cool the water looked under the shadows of the birch trees. It made Dorothy feel thirsty to see the sparkling water, but it would not have been safe for a little girl to climb down the steep rocks to get a drink.

"See how those birch trees have been girdled," said Mother to Miss Grace. "Isn't it a shame for people to be so thoughtless!"

"Indeed it is," said Miss Grace. "I suppose a good deal of that is due to ignorance, though."

"We mean, Dorothy," explained Mother, "that one should never cut around a tree, as some people have done in order to get strips of bark from those birches. Cutting around the tree, or 'girdling' it, may kill the beautiful thing."

"We never do that," said Margaret Fairfield. "We strip the bark from fallen logs, not from live trees. You ought to see, Dorothy, the pretty things we make from birch bark — baskets, and flower-holders, and napkin rings, and lots of other things."

"Will you show me when we get home?" asked Dorothy eagerly.

"Yes, we will," said Margaret.

Just then they heard a quick "tap-tap-tap-tap."

"Ah, there's a woodpecker and he's

quite near," said Mother softly. "Let's not make a noise and perhaps we can see him."

All stood very still, peering into the woods.

"I see him! On that old tree," whispered Margaret Sayre, pointing.

There was the little fellow, in his black-and-white coat and red cap, clinging with his strong little claws to the tree-trunk, and hammering rapidly with his bill on the bark of the tree.

"Why does he do that, Mother?" asked Dorothy in a whisper.

"He knows that that old tree is likely to have grubs and insects under its bark. He is hammering to make a hole in the bark so as to get a feast."

The woodpecker kept hard at work, not minding the people even though he saw they were quite near.

"The wood creatures are n't so timid

up here as they are in some places," said Miss Grace.

"No," said Mother. "They are never abused, so they aren't suspicious of humans."

"I think I'd better not linger or I'll miss the postman after all," then said Miss Grace.

So they started on again.

As they climbed out of the hollow they saw the village perched on the top of the next hill. Such a tiny village it was! There were just four houses and a church to be seen. One house was Mr. Gifford's and his store was in a part of his house. Another house had the post-office in a part of it.

"Oh, I remember the church, Mother," cried Dorothy.

"Do you?" said Mother. "It's a pretty little church, and the view from its porch is lovely enough for Heaven itself."

"Are services held there during the summer?" asked Miss Grace.

"Yes," answered Mother. "Most of the preaching is done by the men of our party. Mr. Burchard and the Mr. Fairfields take turns, and sometimes the minister from Bock's Harbor comes over."

"Mr. Burchard always preaches a children's sermon, too," said Margaret Fairfield. "He tells nice stories."

Every one was glad to get to the shade of Mr. Gifford's piazza. As they went into the store Mrs. Gifford came from the house rooms to wait upon them. Mrs. Gifford was glad to see Dorothy and her mother again. She thought Dorothy had grown tall since last summer.

"Where are *your* children, Mrs. Gifford?" asked Mother.

"Richard is out helping his father and Eleanor is visiting in Belfast," said Mrs.

Gifford. "Ferdy and Elizabeth are playing somewhere about."

Then Mother explained about the kitten, and Mrs. Gifford offered to carry him back in the wagon later on, because Mother and the rest would have packages to carry home.

While Mother was talking and buying things, Dorothy looked about the store with interest. It was n't a large store, but you could buy almost anything from it. There were rakes and bananas and shirts and candy and buttons and post-cards and hats and ink and lamps and thread and oil, and more things than Dorothy could have counted in a week.

On the way home Dorothy noticed something that she had not seen on the walk up to the village.

"Oh, Mother! Mother!" she cried. "See those beautiful roses! Oh, may I pick some?"

"Yes, dear," said Mother. "The flowers that grow on the roadside are free to all. I have a little pair of scissors that I always carry for just such a need. Cut the stems and that will save you from getting pricked with the thorns."

Then Mother showed Dorothy how to cut long stems and not to tear off the pretty leaves that belong with the flowers.

Miss Grace picked a bouquet for her room, too.

"I never saw wild roses of such a deep pink as these," Miss Grace said.

"Aren't they wonderful?" said Mother. "Did you know that the wild roses gave the name to this place? When the first French settlers came to these shores two hundred and fifty years ago, they landed in wild-rose time, and they were evidently so impressed with the beauty of the dears that they gave the place a pretty French name which meant 'The Point of the

Roses.' The English settlers who came later could not pronounce the French name properly so it became Point Rozyer as we have it to-day."

Dorothy liked the name very much. She picked a great many flowers, but she was glad to have Mother carry them for her. She seemed to need both hands as well as both feet to enjoy walking and playing!

When they were part-way home Margaret Fairfield exclaimed: —

"Oh, this is the place where the trail to the boys' camp begins. Let's steal up and surprise them."

Dorothy had not noticed any path, but Margaret pointed out bent grass and a broken branch among the growing things on one side of the road.

"The boys turn in here," Margaret said, "and plunge into the woods. They are pretty careful not to cut and break

things so people won't follow their trail, but I know this is the place."

Then they crept, one by one, under the fence that was between the road and the woods. In the woods the Margarets' sharp eyes noted signs that showed where people had passed. The two girls led the way between bushes, under low hemlock boughs which sometimes slapped their faces, up mossy rocks, till finally with a whoop they dashed out upon two tents which were almost hidden under a thick clump of spruce and cedar trees.

Arthur and Lincoln sprang out of a tent, Arthur brandishing an axe and Lincoln a gun.

"Who comes here?" they shouted, pretending to be very fierce.

"Heap good friends!" answered Mother.

"Friends welcome!" the braves replied, lowering their weapons and looking very mild.

The boys were really delighted to show their quarters.

They had two tents. One was their sleeping-tent. Its floor was covered with sweet-smelling balsam boughs. Dorothy lay down upon the bed and thought it was very nice. The other tent was the cooking-tent. Here the boys had a tiny alcohol stove. They could not have a real Indian fire for fear of burning up the woods.

"The boys had a pow-wow here before you came," said Margaret Fairfield. "They sent invitations on pieces of birch bark. They used picture writing like the Indians."

"Yes, and after the 'eats,'" said Margaret Sayre, "Mrs. Hopper and Papa danced and Mr. James Fairfield drummed a tune for them on a tin pail. It was awfully funny. Papa is so tall and thin, and Mrs. Hopper is so little, and they made-

believe be so solemn about it that we laughed till we fell over."

Just then Arthur said:—

"Sh-h-h! See that bunny over there trying to hide himself by playing 'freeze'?"

They looked in the direction of Arthur's pointing, but at first they did not see any bunny. Presently Dorothy caught sight of the little fellow, sitting as motionless as a statue. This was just like the story of "Raggylug," and Dorothy was breathless with delight.

After a few moments some noise made bunny jump and get out of the way as fast as he could hop.

"The squirrels play on the ridge-pole of our tent nearly every night," said Lincoln.

"Do you sleep here every night?" asked Miss Grace.

"No," laughed Arthur. "To tell the truth it is n't as comfortable a bed as it looks. We've tried it only a few times."

Now Mother said: —

"I really must go, but I am very glad you let us see your wigwams, oh, brave Chiefs."

"Oh, Mrs. Rogers, please just wait till the boys show their spy-tree!" begged Margaret Fairfield.

So they all waited, while the boys ran to a tall pine near by. They climbed swiftly to the very top of this tree. The boys were then so high that they could see over the tops of all the other trees in that part of the woods, out over the fields to the shining Bay.

"I see Dad and Uncle Jim and your father, Dorothy, rowing in from 'Nokomis,'" called Arthur.

"I see smoke coming out of our chimney," called Lincoln.

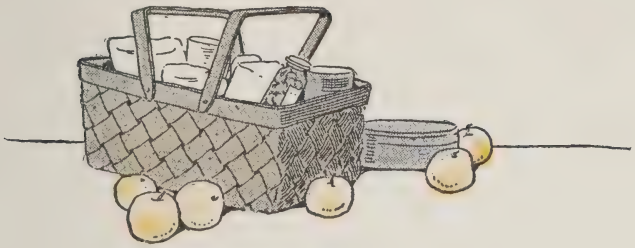
"Oh, how I wish I were up there!" exclaimed Dorothy.

"Frances climbs the spy-tree as well as the boys," said Margaret Sayre.

"Well, you little girls will have to hurry up and grow. Then perhaps you can do it some day," said Mother. "Now we really *must* go."

So they all called good-bye to the boys and followed the trail back to the road, and then they went on home to get ready for dinner.

Chapter VI



THE PICNIC

CHAPTER VI

THE PICNIC

ONE day when all the people were together in the dining-room eating dinner, Uncle Ned said: —

"I think it 's about time for this company to have a picnic. What do the rest of you think about it?"

"Oh, we think so, too!" cried the children, and the grown people were as delighted as the children with the idea.

"All right," said Uncle Ned. "To-morrow promises good weather, so let 's go to-morrow. I 'll make fish chowder for my share of the grub."

"I 'll make stuffed eggs for my contribution," said Mrs. Sayre.

"We 'll make the sandwiches," offered Miss Hart and Miss Grace.

"I 'll help about the sandwiches," said

Mrs. Hopper. "You 'll need help to make enough for this hungry crowd."

"I have plenty of doughnuts, cookies, pickles, and olives," said Mrs. Sumner.

So each family offered something.

Early next morning every one began to make ready.

Mr. Sayre and the boys walked up to Mr. Gifford's store and bought eggs, coffee, condensed milk, and orange marmalade.

Mrs. Sayre, in Mrs. Sumner's kitchen, made the stuffed eggs.

Mrs. Hopper and the two Miss Harts came down to Dorothy's bungalow, where, with Mother's help, they cut the bread and spread the sandwiches. Mrs. Hopper made jam sandwiches, Miss Hart made orange marmalade sandwiches, Miss Grace made peanut butter sandwiches, and Mother made some of plain bread and butter. The sandwiches, when finished,

were wrapped in waxed paper and each kind was packed in a box by itself. The boxes were then tied securely with strings.

Uncle Ned's day had begun earlier than the others'.

First he went out to his garden and dug a lot of little new potatoes.

Then he rowed out to the "Baileywick," which was the name of the fisherman's boat, to buy fresh fish. Mr. Bailey slept and ate in his boat all summer and caught fish to sell.

Next Uncle Ned took his fish down on the beach, close to the water, and cleaned them. It was a very handy place to clean fish because every minute or two the little waves ran up close to Uncle Ned as if to say, "Here I am. Now dip in your fish quickly and I 'll wash it before I run back."

Out on the back porch of Uncle Ned's bungalow the girls were washing the potatoes.

In Aunt Jessie's kitchen Arthur was cutting thin slices of pork and chopping some onions into small bits.

The fish and the potatoes and the onions and the pork and other good things were going into the chowder. When everything was ready, Uncle Ned was to cook the chowder on Aunt Jessie's stove. Then the chowder was to be carried in the kettle to the picnic place, where, just before eating, it would be made hot over a fire on the beach.

Aunt Jessie was doing a dozen things at once and doing them all as easily as play. She kept an eye on mischievous Billy, answered Arthur's questions about how thin to slice the pork and how fine to chop the onions, found kettle and spoons for Uncle Ned, packed the picnic basket with the enamel-ware cups, the coffee-pot, spoons, sugar, salt, paper napkins, wooden plates, matches, can-opener, and

other necessary things so likely to be forgotten by some one.

At last everybody had finished his or her "stunt," and the people were gathering at the pier carrying boxes, baskets, packages, sweaters, pails, a little oil stove, a black kettle, bathing-suits, towels, and still other stuff for the trip.

The float was nearly covered with the things to be taken aboard "Nokomis."

"Goodness! Are we going to eat all this food?" exclaimed Mrs. Sayre. "Why, there 's enough for an army!"

"There won't be any left, Mrs. Sayre," said Uncle Ned, "and I 'll wager you 'll eat your full share of it after a sail in this air!"

Now began the loading. The rowboats and the "George" were filled so full of people and packages that Miss Hart looked more doubtful than ever about stepping into a little boat.

"It looks as if it would *surely* tip over with one more person in it," she said.

"Oh, no, it won't, Miss Hart," said Arthur. "We could pack lots more in it."

"That's a *slight* exaggeration, Arthur," said Aunt Jessie. "But it's perfectly safe, really, Miss Hart. The water is so calm this morning."

It was not a long trip to Drake's Point, the picnic place. Not all of the people went in "Nokomis." Some were in Uncle James's sailboat, the "Butterfly." Lincoln and Frances were paddling a canoe with Ruth as a passenger in the middle.

"Is that Lincoln's canoe?" asked Dorothy.

"No, it is Mr. Sayre's," said Aunt Elizabeth. "But Mr. Sayre says it belongs to all of us. Mr. Sayre takes much more pleasure giving his possessions away than most people do in getting theirs."

In a short time "Nokomis" dropped

anchor near Drake's Point beach. Now began the unloading. This was even more of a task than loading because there was no pier to make landing easy. The men had to row the boats close up to the sloping beach. Then the person in the bow would spring out and pull the boat farther up on the pebbles. He would try to hold the boat steady but could not quite keep it from wobbling, while the passengers, one at a time, came up to the bow and sprang out on the shore.

After all the people and all the baskets and packages were landed, the little boats were made fast to the beach by placing heavy rocks on their ropes. If the men had n't fastened them like this, after a while the tide would have carried the boats out to sea.

No sooner had they landed than the girls asked their mothers: —

"May we go in bathing now?"

And the mothers said: —

"Yes, you must go in before eating or not at all."

So the girls found a place behind some thick bushes where they changed their clothes for their bathing-suits. They hung their clothes on the bushes while they went into the water.

While the girls were frolicking in the new bathing-place, the older people were preparing the dinner.

Uncle Ned found a nook between some great rocks where the wind did not blow. He placed the oil stove here and set the kettle of chowder on it.

Dorothy's father prepared a fire for the coffee-pot. He had to make a stove for the fire.

First he built a little pile of flat stones. Then he made another pile just the same height a few inches away from the first one. The space between the piles of stones

was for the fire. The coffee-pot was to set across the tops of the stones with the fire underneath it.

To kindle the fire, Father found some pieces of dry birch bark. With his knife he whittled these into tiny splinters. When he lit a match the splinters blazed merrily. Then Father put on larger pieces of dry wood.

Uncle Ned made the coffee and Miss Hart helped tend fire and watch to take the coffee off if it boiled over. The tide was coming in up the beach, so Miss Hart had to watch the ocean, as well as the fire and the coffee, and to be careful not to step into the water as it crept nearer and nearer the little stone stove.

Other people were taking cups and plates and spoons from the big basket, opening olive bottles and condensed-milk cans, untying the boxes and packages of sandwiches, doughnuts, cookies, cakes, bana-

nas, eggs, and other goodies too many to count.

The dinner-table was the clean grass a little above the beach where the fires were cooking the dinner.

Now Uncle Ned sang out that chowder and coffee were ready. Mr. Sayre beat two pail covers together for a gong to call the children who were exploring the rocks along the beach.

Soon the feasting began. Ah, what a dining-room that was! The blue sky was the roof. There were no walls to shut the people in from views of the lovely Bay and its green islands. There were flowers all about, not merely flowers in one little vase on the table.

And as for the appetites!

"You don't feel at all hungry, Mrs. Sayre, do you?" asked Uncle Ned.

Mrs. Sayre laughed.

"Well, if all the other people are as

starved as I am, I now believe that there won't be any food to carry home," she said.

All the people declared that Uncle Ned's chowder was the best they 'd ever tasted. Almost everybody took a second cupful. Some of the men climbed down the rocks to the kitchen on the beach and filled the cups, then brought them up to the people in the dining-room.

After the chowder was all gone, the cups were thoroughly washed in the sea, then the grown-ups drank their coffee from the cups.

The people ate and ate and ate. The fathers and mothers laughed and joked and enjoyed themselves as if they were n't any older than their boys and girls.

Finally all were satisfied and there were still some doughnuts and cookies left.

"Why, how is this?" said Mr. Burchard. "Mrs. Sayre, you guessed wrong."

"Oh, no," said Aunt Jessie; "the children will be needing a lunch soon!"

No one except Billy felt very lively for a while after dinner. Billy kept two people busy helping him walk all over the picnic table and beyond it. If his daddy or any of the uncles were in his way, Billy walked over them.

Presently Uncle Ned began to sing "Lord Jeffrey Amherst."

All joined in singing for Uncle Ned's and Uncle James's and Mr. Burchard's college. Then they sang "Boola Boola" for Mr. Sayre's Yale and "Fair Harvard" for Father's college.

Then Dorothy begged for the songs about the katydid and Lieber Heidrich and the Ark and Uncle Ned's other funny songs.

After the singing some of the people washed the cups and spoons and packed the baskets.

BILLY WANTED TO PICK TOO

Then Aunt Elizabeth said: —

"I 'm going to fill this pail with blueberries that I know are growing over in that field."

The other ladies each took a cup and Aunt Jessie found another pail. All then followed Aunt Elizabeth to the berry-field. Each person who had n't a pail picked into a cup, and when the cup was filled, she poured the berries into Aunt Jessie's or Aunt Elizabeth's pail.

Billy wanted to pick too. So Miss Grace sat beside him on the ground and gave him her cup. She picked a berry and handed it to Billy. Billy threw it, hard, into the cup, enjoying the tinkling sound the berry made in the bottom of the cup. Then Miss Grace passed another berry to Billy and he threw that into the cup. Then Miss Grace picked another and another and another berry for Billy. Every now and then the baby

would bend his curly head over the cup looking with great delight at the little blue balls rolling around the bottom. He was amused with this play for a long, long time. If you had hunted for Billy in the field, though, you might not have found him, because the tall grass about the baby was higher than his red-gold curls.

The little girls, while the mothers and Billy were berrying, were having a fine time on the rocks. At this beach there were long stretches of flat ledges as well as the high, uneven rocks they were used to playing among near their bungalows.

"Oh, let 's choose houses on the rocks," cried Margaret Sayre.

The other girls agreed and at once began arranging their rooms. Ruth and Frances took Dorothy for their little girl and the two Margarets lived by themselves.

Ruth and Frances and Dorothy found a splendid house. There were three round-

ing hollows which at once they knew were meant for beds. There was a tall wall of rock with what looked like little shelves in its walls, and near by was a low, square, flat-topped rock.

"Oh, here's our china closet and dining-room table," cried Ruth.

At once the girls hunted for a number of saucer-like shells which they placed on the shelves of the china closet. They then set the table and ate a hasty meal.

Their next find was a splendid fireplace with a seat before it. They were so charmed with their house by this time that they wanted the Margarets to see it. They called to the girls to come over to them.

"No, you come here first and see our house," called back the Margarets.

So Ruth and Frances and Dorothy went over to the other girls.

"Ours is n't a *house*, it 's a *palace!*" said Margaret Fairfield loftily.

"Yes, come and we'll show you our grand stairway and our tennis courts and the Japanese gardens," said Margaret Sayre.

Then the Margarets pointed out what really looked like a broad stairway. The tennis courts were wide, flat rocks curiously marked with straight, white lines. The Japanese gardens were laid out with many pools of water among the dry spaces. In the pools were pretty seaweed, tiny snails, shining pebbles, and little white barnacle houses.

Dorothy always loved these rock pools. She loved to pick up a snail's shell when the snail was looking out of his door, and see how quickly the little creature would get inside and close and glue his door together. She would watch for a long time the barnacles that looked so dead at low tide with their little house doors shut tight. Then, when the waters came running up

over their houses, it was fun to see how the little doors would open and out would come tiny arms reaching to catch food from the water. Sometimes she found star-fishes among the seaweed, and sea-urchins with spines all over their backs. She thought the sea-urchins must be a sort of cousin to the spiny porcupine Margaret had told her about.

After their visitors had examined their grand home, the ladies of the palace called to see the china closet and the fireplace of their neighbors. They liked this new house almost as much as the palace.

Now the pails and cups of the berry-pickers were filled and some of the mothers were thinking it was time for the littlest children to get home. So the baskets and spoons and oil stove and sweaters and bathing-suits and towels were gathered on the beach ready to load into the boats, but the lunch-boxes were all empty.

"Where are those doughnuts and cookies that were left after dinner?" asked Mrs. Sayre.

"Oho! Oho! Did you think you'd find them?" crowed the boys. "We ate so little dinner that we were obliged to have a lunch this afternoon!"

Then the girls wished they had remembered to get a lunch too.

On the way home "Nokomis" and the "Butterfly" and the canoe had a race. There was very little wind to make the sailboats go, so the canoe with the boys in it won the race. The boys had great fun teasing their fathers for not being able to catch up with them.

How tired and dirty they all felt when they reached the little pier! But every one felt just as Dorothy did when she exclaimed:—

"That's the nicest picnic I ever went to in my life!"

Chapter VII

THE CHRISTMAS TREE WOODS

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THE CHRISTMAS TREE WOODS

ONE bright morning Margaret Fairfield came to Dorothy's little house with a message from Uncle Ned.

"Everybody is invited to a beach fire on our beach to-night," Margaret said.

"How delightful!" exclaimed Mother.

Dorothy was very curious to know what a "beach fire" meant and she wished for night to come that minute so as to find out.

"We sit up very late when we have a beach fire," said Margaret.

"Yes, and little girls only six years old agree to take naps in the afternoon if they wish to be up so late," Mother said.

Dorothy knew what Mother meant. She promised to try to sleep that afternoon.

"What are you going to do this morning, Margaret?" asked Dorothy.

"I don't know. What do you think would be nice?" Margaret answered.

"How would you little girls like to go with me up the wood road toward Drake's Point?" asked Mother. "I am going to try to fill some fern baskets for the piazza."

"Oh, yes, that would be fun!" the little girls said eagerly.

So they were soon on their way, Mother carrying a large basket and a trowel.

When they reached the main road and the duck pond, they did not turn toward the village, but in the opposite direction. Very soon they were in the woods that came close to the sides of the road.

Dorothy always loved this road. It seemed just like walking in a story book. Everywhere she looked Dorothy saw Christmas trees, up the hill on one side of the road, through the level reaches, on

the other side. Ahead the road made a turn so she could not see where it was going. She could see only Christmas trees. Behind, there was another turn and Christmas trees shut her in. The trees were not covered with candles, to be sure, but they were decorated with little new branches having soft, bright green ends which one does not see when one buys Christmas trees for Santa Claus to decorate.

Along the roadside flowed a little brook. It was just a baby brook, and it slipped softly over clean pebbles and smooth white rocks. Soon it disappeared under the road singing a little gurgling song.

It was like fairyland in the woods, too. Margaret and Dorothy found the fairies' tables — that was what they called the mushrooms. Some of these tables were bright red on top with the under side and the leg of purest white, beautifully carved.

Some were of bright yellow, some were like pink coral.

The moss that covered the rocks looked like forests of wee fairy trees, and there were baby Christmas trees too, no higher than Dorothy's hand. The fairies had left their jewels scattered all along the roadside, not a bit afraid that mortals could steal their treasures. Ferns and lacy grass were spangled and threaded with pearly drops prettier than any hard jewels in a city shop.

The depths of the woods were full of mystery as Dorothy peered into them, her eyes big with wonder. Sometimes it seemed as if there were seas of bright green where the sun found its way down among the dark fir trees and lighted waving masses of ferns.

Margaret and Dorothy helped Mother find things for her basket. With her trowel Mother dug up by the roots some

HELPED MOTHER FIND THINGS FOR HER BASKET

perfect little baby trees, several different kinds of moss, the prettiest wee ferns they could find, lovely trailing ground-pine, and other beautiful things.

When the basket was filled with what Mother wanted, they all walked back to Dorothy's bungalow. Then Mother and the little girls, working at the piazza table, arranged in pretty birch-bark holders little make-believe bits of woods.

When all the birch baskets were finished, Dorothy thought she had never seen anything so like fairyland. She looked and looked among the tiny trees thinking she must see fairies if only she looked long enough. But she did not have on the magic glasses necessary, so the fairies kept themselves hidden from her eyes.

Next Mother climbed up on a chair and hung one of the fern-holders on a hook fastened to a post of the piazza. It

was n't an ordinary iron hook. It was a great deal prettier. Father had found on the beach some pieces of driftwood, which were really branches that had once broken off from trees near the shore. The wind and the sea had cleaned and bleached the wood to a pretty silvery color, and some of the small branches were shaped a little like hooks. Father brought these home, nailed one to each post of the piazza, and there they had been waiting for Mother's lovely fern-holders.

Soon a fern basket was hanging from each hook. The baskets looked very pretty. Mother said they would keep growing prettier, because she had put into the bottom of the baskets rich soil which the roots of the ferns liked to eat as much as little girls liked bread and milk.

Dorothy and Margaret played quietly on Dorothy's piazza until dinner-time. In the afternoon Dorothy tried hard to take a

nap so as to be fresh for the beach fire and the sitting up late. For a long time she lay on her little cot bed very wide awake thinking about the beach fire, and about the fairy woods, and about Christmas Tree Land, and about the Drake's Point Picnic — and about the baby ducklings — and the kittens — and the little windmill man waving his arms in the wind — and the humming-birds' wings going hum-m-m, hum-m-m, hum-m-m —

And then she was fast asleep dreaming that she and the humming-bird and the windmill man and a beautiful fairy, all pearly spangles, were sitting under a Christmas tree eating blueberries from one of the fairies' pink coral tables.

Dorothy had a nice long nap, so after supper Mother let her go out to play with the other children. It would not be dark enough for the beach fire for quite a while after supper.

The children played hide-and-seek in the tall grass just beyond their woods. The evening was so still that they could hear a whisper or a rustle for quite a distance, so they had to be extra careful not to get caught. Once while Dorothy and Margaret crouched in the grass, hardly breathing, they heard the fire crackling up in Mr. Sumner's fireplace, and old Mr. Jeremy Fisher saying "Tunk!" as he sat on his log awhile before going to bed. Little birds, up in the woods that made a dark fringe against the pale yellow sky, were singing plaintive little good-night songs.

Arthur and Lincoln joined in the hide-and-seek game, which made it very exciting. The younger girls were soon tired enough to be ready to stop playing and go over to the beach where the people were gathering.

Now Aunt Jessie told Dorothy how,

every year, the "Bungaloafers" had a beach fire, using the same old tree for a backlog. She said that many years ago, in the winter, furious gales of wind had blown down a huge old pine tree and torn it up from the ground by the roots. Mr. Sumner had cut away all the branches for firewood, but the enormous heavy root stump was too big and hard to pay for cutting it up. Another storm and wind came and floated the great stump out to sea where the waves gave it a ride and finally brought it back to the land and left it on Uncle Ned's beach. Recently, little storms had broken off small trees in front of Dorothy's bungalow. So Uncle Ned and Father had dragged the small trees over to Uncle Ned's beach. They piled some of the little spruce trees against the pine-tree stump. Others of the little trees they left in another pile a short distance away.

It seemed a long time before it was dark enough to light the fire, but little by little the light in the western sky faded and the faint stars came out, grew brighter and brighter, till at last the dark sky was spangled with sparkling star jewels.

Then Uncle Ned touched a match to the pile in front of the stump.

All the people sat on the beach a little back from the fire because they knew how hot it would feel on their faces, but all sat where they could see the fire well.

What a wonderful sight that was when the flame caught and rushed through the dry spruce boughs, sending showers of sparks like gorgeous fireworks up toward the starry sky. Every one said "Oh-h!" and "Ah-h!" and "How beautiful!" Dorothy thought it looked like the lights in an Arabian Nights' palace.

When one little spruce tree was almost burned down, Uncle Ned and Father

dragged from the other pile another tree which they threw on the flame. Again the flame ran up the tree and out along its branches, and again the starry sparks flew as if they were determined to reach their star brothers up in the dark sky.

After a while Uncle Ned began to sing. There was one song that all the Point Rozyer "Bungaloafers" especially loved. It was called "The Song of the Rose." It was a sweet, old-fashioned song and it seemed to belong to this summer land of lovely wild roses and happy outdoor life.

Uncle Ned began: —

> "No beautiful palace have I on the hill,
> No picture to hang in my hall,
> But never a painter can match with his skill
> The roses a-bloom on my wall."

Uncle James's deep voice joined Uncle Ned's high tenor, then the other fathers and mothers and the children joined in

and sang with all their hearts and voices. After "The Song of the Rose," they sang "Drink to me only with thine eyes" and "Annie Laurie" and "The bonny, bonny banks o' Loch Lomond," and other lovely songs. They did not care for the funny ones to-night. Every one felt like having a quietly beautiful time; the stars were so still and the gentle lapping of the waves along the shore sounded so pretty when the roaring of the flames died down to a soft little singing tune.

The children after a while grew very sleepy, but they did not want to go in to bed, oh, no! and the mothers did not make them go till the last of the little spruces was burned. Then the people said good-nights and went to the different houses, humming softly as they walked slowly home.

Dorothy was sound asleep in her bed in a few minutes, but Ruth and Margaret

Sayre and the others who lived at Mr. Sumner's house told Dorothy next morning a little story of what they had seen on the way home.

They said Mr. Sayre and Mr. Burchard had lighted lanterns to help the people find safe footing through the woods. As they reached the road near the duck pond, they heard a queer little sound that seemed to come from the woods on the hill back of Mr. Sumner's house. It sounded as if some bird felt frightened and lonesome and was crying for its mother. Every time the bird gave its frightened "Pe-e-p" the old mother duck would answer with a loud "Quack, quack!"

All the people stopped and listened, wondering what it meant. Then the "Pe-e-p" sounded nearer, and it no longer seemed to come from the woods, but from the road a little way off. Then Margaret Sayre spied a tiny dark figure

hurrying along the road crying "Pe-e-p! Pe-e-p! Pe-e-p!"

"Oh! Oh!" she cried. "It's a baby duckling! He wandered away from his mother and got lost, and it got so dark he did n't know the way home. And then he cried and the old mother duck 'quacks' to tell him to come toward the sound of her voice!"

Sure enough, the frightened baby duckling was hurrying as fast as its waddling little legs would carry it toward mother's voice.

I suppose that funny "quack" sounded as beautiful to the baby duckling as Dorothy's dear mother's lovely voice, singing lullabies, sounded to Dorothy.

The people watched the little brown duckling plunge through the reeds into the water to its mother, and it was sweet to hear the baby's voice change from a frightened "Pe-e-p" to soft little talk

about how glad he was to feel mother's breast again. Mother duck talked softly to the baby, too, and I have no doubt she told the little fellow never to wander so far from home again until he was older and stronger.

I don't believe that baby duckling ever forgot, do you?

Chapter VIII

FOGGY DAYS

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FOGGY DAYS

DOROTHY had now lived in the little house in the woods for three weeks, and every day there had been some new and lovely thing to do out of doors. Every morning the sun came up, clear and bright, out of the blue waters of the Bay. All day long the sun rode like a golden chariot through clear blue skies. Every night the chariot sank behind the dark fringe of trees on Mr. Sumner's hill leaving behind for a long time a sky painted with lovely colors.

All the people said what wonderful weather they were having, and no one stayed in the house a minute longer than was necessary.

At last one morning Dorothy woke to a different kind of day. Her first thought

was that it was n't daytime at all because everything looked so dark and gloomy. Then she heard the rattling of tins in the kitchen and she knew that Mother was up.

Dorothy jumped from bed and looked out of her window. The trees were soaking, dripping wet, and queerly enough she could see only the trees close by her window. Most of the woods seemed to have disappeared. Dorothy ran into the living-room and looked out of the window. She could see again, the near-by trees, but where were the water and the pier and the little boats and "Nokomis"? Where were the fishing-weir and Blue Mountain? Dorothy could not see any of these familiar sights.

She ran to Mother and asked: —

"Oh, Mother, is this a fog?"

"Yes, indeed, dear, a real Maine fog," said Mother. "It 's like a thick white veil

or cloudy blanket that hides everything from us except what is close at hand."

"I think it 's like what the fairies use to make things invisible, don't you, Mother?" said Dorothy.

"So it is," said Mother. "It 's a very, very wet veil, though, and rather cold, so put on your clothes, dear. I left them by the fire to dry out, for they were dampened even by one night of fog."

Dorothy dressed in front of the crackling fire, which "felt good" even though this was midsummer. The breakfast-table was set indoors to-day, not out on the sopping wet piazza.

After breakfast Dorothy asked: —

"Must I stay in the house, Mother? May n't I put on my rubber coat and go over to Margaret's?"

"You may go to Margaret's this morning, Dorothy," said Mother, "on condition that Aunt Jessie lets her girls come

here to spend the afternoon with you. Aunt Jessie usually has all the children of Point Rozyer at her house and she ought to have a rest once in a while. Be sure to invite Ruth and Margaret Sayre for the afternoon, too."

The morning at Aunt Jessie's was very interesting. All the girls busied themselves at the big dining-room table making things for an indoor party which Frances and Ruth were planning to give some rainy day. They planned to invite all the grown people as well as all the children, and to have a present for each person. This meant making a great many gifts, and none of the presents were to be bought at a store. All were to come from the woods and the shore and the waters of Point Rozyer. The girls had collected the materials and now that it was n't very pleasant out of doors, this seemed just the morning to work.

Dorothy was delighted with the lovely things she saw the girls make. She herself made a necklace of the seeds from a kind of seaweed that clung to the rocks all about. Ruth was making a pretty basket from the sweet-grass that grew near Uncle Ned's bungalow. Frances made napkin rings and little baskets and flower-holders of birch bark. The two Margarets were working with the clay that they found in a certain spot on Uncle Ned's beach. They made candlesticks of the clay and little baskets and vases. Some of the vases they decorated with rows of tiny shells. Margaret Fairfield showed Dorothy a clay bowl which she had made last summer. Between some of the cobblestones of the fireplace chimney were little shelf-like places. One was just large enough to hold the clay bowl, and Aunt Jessie had filled the bowl with lovely ground-pine which looked very pretty

trailing down the gray stones of the chimney.

The girls worked busily till noon. Then they packed their materials in the big picnic basket ready to carry them to Dorothy's house after dinner.

Dorothy now noticed that the fog had turned to rain, a steady downpour.

Before they started up to Cedar Hill Farm for dinner Mother said: —

"You 'll need more than a rubber coat to keep you dry now, Honey. Wait a minute. I have a surprise for you!"

Dorothy was all eagerness. Mother's surprises were always worth while. Mother went into her room and brought from it a pair of little rubber boots and a rubber cap. The cap had a stiff brim, like a fireman's hat, so that the rain would run off the brim and not get into one's eyes and hair and neck.

Dorothy capered about the room with

delight. Then she sat on the floor ready to pull on the rubber boots.

"Wait a minute, dear," said Mother. "You may first take off your petticoats, put on your serge bloomers and play you are a little boy. Then you can tuck the bloomers into the boot-tops and walk through the high, wet grass without getting wet at all."

What fun this was! Dorothy flew to get off her girl dress and put on bloomers and middy. Then the boots, the rubber coat, and the cap went on, and she was ready for the wettest weather.

Dorothy ran out of the house to enjoy splashing through the woods. The first thing that happened to her was to slip on the wet ground and sit down hard! This was another surprise, but Dorothy thought it a part of the fun. When she clambered up, she found that her hands were all "stuck up," like the Tar-Baby's.

So Mother said, since they were going to dinner, the hands must be washed again.

The next time Dorothy walked more carefully, and she did not fall down again, although the wet grass and the clayey road made walking hard work.

On Mr. Sumner's piazza a merry crowd of people pulled off shiny wet rainy-day coats and rubbers to leave them out on the piazza while they went into the dining-room. At dinner the girls gave their invitations for the party which was to be held the second rainy day after this one at Uncle Ned's and Aunt Jessie's bungalow.

Well, it rained and it rained all the afternoon and night. Next day the fog hid the world in a white blanket. For many days it rained and when it was n't raining it was foggy. The trees and the grass and the ground were soaked through and through. Mothers were kept busy

drying out stockings and shoes and other clothes before the blazing logs. All the piazzas were decorated with rows of mud-caked rubbers and rubber boots. Dorothy's mother found mould gathering on the brown suitcase, so she watched things in the closet very carefully after that.

The girls had their party one rainy afternoon. Every one came and had a splendid time.

First, the girls acted charades to entertain the company. One end of the long living-room was the stage. The audience sat in chairs arranged in rows, as in a theater, facing the stage. The fathers made a great deal of nonsense and the ladies and boys laughed hard at their jokes, but the girls felt too seriously the responsibility of entertaining so large a party to notice the nonsense.

One of the charades they acted was the word "Nokomis." First they repre-

sented the syllable "No." In the next scene Frances was *com*bing Margaret Sayre's hair. For the third syllable the girls played ball and they often *mis*sed catching the ball.

By this time the grown people had guessed "Nokomis," but they did not let the girls know that they had guessed. They wanted to see what the girls would do for the whole word. They expected the children would represent sailing in "Nokomis," but this was not what happened.

When the make-believe curtain was lifted, there sat Frances under the dining-room table. She was holding Dorothy in her lap and singing to her. In front of Frances and Dorothy, Ruth lay rolling back and forth on the floor.

The grown people were so surprised that for a minute no one spoke. Then Uncle Ned exclaimed: —

"By the shores of Gitche Gumee,

. . . . . .

There the wrinkled, old Nokomis
Nursed the little Hiawatha!"

The grown people applauded and the girls sprang up, looking very much pleased.

Uncle James said: —

"Ruth, your representation of the Big-Sea-Water was so realistic, I might have been seasick in a few minutes!"

The next word was meant for "Ocean." The grown people had some difficulty guessing, because the girls acted the second syllable as though it had been spelled "s-h-i-n." One of the girls "shinned" up the door-jamb.

After the charades everybody joined in playing a game in which each person represented an animal and had to make the animal's sound quickly at certain times. Then the fathers were so funny that before long the game broke up in shouts of laughter.

Next the people were told to hunt for their presents which were hidden behind curtains, up on cross-beams, and in all sorts of cubby-holes in the living-room.

How pleased the people were with the gifts and how they complimented the girls for their clever work!

Lastly came the refreshments, pink lemonade, popcorn, and fudge. The girls had made the lemonade and popped the corn, but Arthur had made the fudge for them.

After the refreshments were eaten and the party was breaking up, Mrs. Hopper quickly composed a little song in honor of the girls, and the grown people sang it lustily, the girls blushing with pleasure at the praise.

Some days after the party the usual morning fog did not look quite so heavy. Before long the sun actually pierced through the white veil and then a wind

came up and began to blow the fog away out to sea. It was pretty to see the soft, white, filmy veil resting a while in the tree-tops before it disappeared altogether.

Now followed days of radiant sunshine. Every one was happy to live out of doors again without getting wet and muddy every time he took a walk.

Uncle Ned said at dinner one day: —

"Do you people realize that the moon will be full to-night and that the lady rises early? Better not miss coming down to Fairfield's Beach to-night."

This meant for Dorothy another afternoon nap in order to sit up late for the evening by the shore, but she was very glad to go to bed in the daytime for the sake of the evening's fun.

Of all the beautiful views of that beautiful place never had land or water seemed more lovely than they appeared that evening, bathed in silvery moonlight. All the

little boats of the neighborhood were out in the Bay, filled with people who rowed slowly about enjoying the beauty. Lincoln took Dorothy and her mother out in Mr. Sayre's canoe and Dorothy watched the paddle scatter showers of jewels as it dipped and rose in the moon's path on the water. The people out in the little boats here and there began to sing. Dorothy and her mother did not join in, it was so pretty to listen to the music across the water.

Presently Dorothy and her friends sat on the rocks, wrapped warmly because Maine nights are cool, and they sang some more songs and they discovered queer animals in the clouds which the moon lighted, and nobody wanted to go to bed.

At last Mrs. Hopper said: —

"This family must start for home, even if the rest of you mean to stay out all night."

And what do you suppose! They found they could not walk across Uncle Ned's beach over toward Dorothy's bungalow! The beach was completely covered with water, up to the very roots of the trees.

The boys howled in make-believe terror: —

"Marooned! Marooned!"

The girls were greatly excited by the strange appearance of their familiar beach, and Uncle Ned said: —

"That 's the highest tide I 've seen in all the years we 've been coming here!"

Arthur and Lincoln walked around through the woods to the pier. There they got the boats and rowed across to the rocks, where Dorothy's family and Uncle James's boarded the boats and traveled home by water.

The Cedar Hill Farm people had to walk through a different woods road than the usual one, because the high tide cut

them off from the shortest route. No one minded a bit, though, and no one had to carry a lantern this night, even under the trees. The moon made the rough roadway quite light enough.

Dorothy stayed all summer long in that pleasant country having beautiful times every day. But if I were to try to tell you all the things she did, this story would go on and on and on till the book would be too heavy for you to hold.

So you must use what Dorothy would call your "think-up-er" and see if you cannot finish this story, imagining everything Dorothy did during the summer while she lived in her little house in the woods by the waters of the blue, blue sea.

THE END

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